RURE

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Da-Mi Seomoon

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RURE 1

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A GOBLIN LIVES IN OUR BACK YARD
HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S FROM ANOTHER WORLD AND SEEMS AS OLD AS TIME
GRANDPA ALWAYS WARNED ME
"DON'T PAY THAT GOBLIN ANY MIND JUST GO ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS AS IF HE WEREN'T EVEN THERE"

I DIDN'T LISTEN INSTEAD I...

...HELD
ITS
HAND

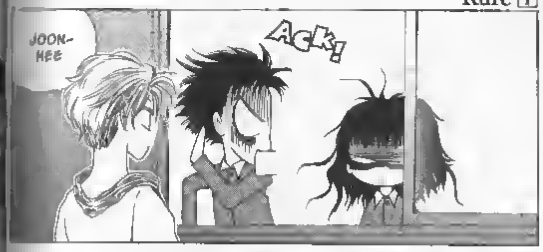
NINE OF DIAMONDS
KING OF CLUBS.
JACK OF DIAMONDS, TEN OF CLUBS... I CAN GUESS THEM ALL

IT'S AMAZING, HA-RU! IT'S LIKE YOU'RE TOTALLY PSYCHIC!
IF WE DO THIS FOR THE TALENT SHOW, WE CAN'T LOSE!
UH... IF YOU SAY SO, JOON-HEE
DO YOU REALLY THINK THIS TRICK WOULD WIN US FIRST PLACE?
WHAT? YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT? EVERYONE LOVES US ♡
JUST SMILING IS PROBABLY ENOUGH TO WIN THE TRICK IS USING ON THE CARD
HOW VERY HUMBLE OF YOU. I THINK I'LL PASS

TALL AND THIN, GREAT BONE STRUCTURE ♡
YOU COULD BE A MODEL ♡
WHAT? OH, COME ON I'M JUST SAYING YOU'RE THE BOMB!
HA-RU! LET'S BE FRIENDS FOREVER!
YEAH, YEAH, OF COURSE
BUT NONE OF THAT IS IMPORTANT, OKAY?
I MIGHT SHE'D LAY OFF WITH THE PSYCHIC STUFF. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN IN TOUCH THAT WAY, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I WANT EVERYONE KNOWING ABOUT IT
HA HA HA HA

MY NAME IS HA-RU SHIN. I'M FIFTEEN AND I WORRY WAY TOO MUCH FOR MY AGE. I GO TO BOARDING SCHOOL IN SEOUL.
HI YA!
CHOP
I HAVE SECRETS SECRETS I CAN'T EVEN TELL MY BEST FRIEND!
We love you Ha-ru!
Mega impressive!
Look at that! Five boards!
She's fierce...
HA-RU, STAR OF THE TAE KWAN DO CLUB

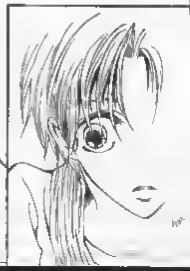
DONG-UK LEE!
THE BOYS ARE JEALOUS YOU'VE MADE THE CLUB POPULAR SUDDENLY I HEAR YOU'RE DOING SOME CARD TRICK FOR THE TALENT SHOW
AH, I'M NOT ALL THAT INTO IT. I'M DOING IT FOR JOON-HEE SHE'S GUNNA FOR THE PRIZE
UH.. I'M STANDING RIGHT BEHIND YOU
THAT SOUNDS JUST LIKE JOON-HEE ALWAYS WANTING TO GET SOMETHING FOR NOTHING IT'S SOUND TO CURSE HER--MAKE HER LOSE HER HAIR, OR SOMETHING HORRIBLE LIKE THAT

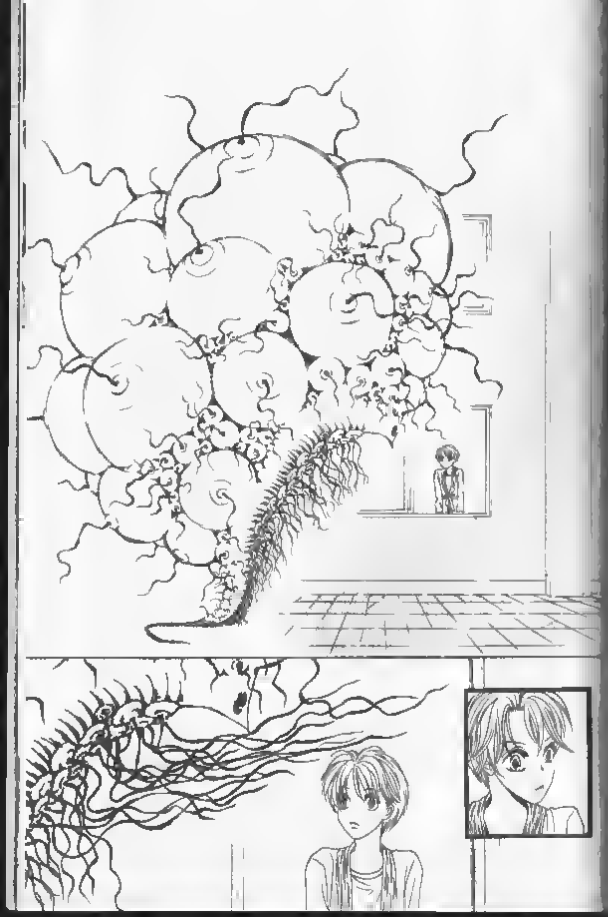

JOON-HEE
ACK!

GOOD GOD! WHY DO YOU HAVE TO SNEAK UP ON PEOPLE LIKE THAT?!
SO, MYSTERY SOLVED

I'VE BEEN WONDERING WHY MY HAIR'S BEEN FALLING OUT

IT MUST BE DONG-UK'S CURSE YOU REALLY MUST TEACH ME HOW YOU DO THAT
Hoh, heh,!
DON'T BE SO CREEPY, JOON-HEE I WAS JUST KIDDING ANYWAY, I'M A GENTLEMAN, AND I DON'T CURSE THE LADIES





OH NO!
DONG-UK! LOOK OUT!
EH?
AH
OH

ACK!
OH NO, NO! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! ARE YOU OKAY?
THANKS
SOMETIMES I SEE SPIRITS.

GRANDFATHER SAYS THE MEN IN OUR FAMILY HAVE BEEN STRONG MYSTICS GOING BACK FOR GENERATIONS
AND THAT BECAUSE I'M LIKE THEM, I NEED TO BE CAUTIOUS BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO BE CAUTIOUS OF
LET'S GO BY THE RAILROAD TRACKS FIRST

OHH SO THIS IS YOUR KOUHAI? HUH? SY LOOKS JUST LIKE I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WOULD
NOH IT'S NO BIG DEAL
SO I'M JUST CAUTIO OF EVERYTHING NOW

MI-RU..

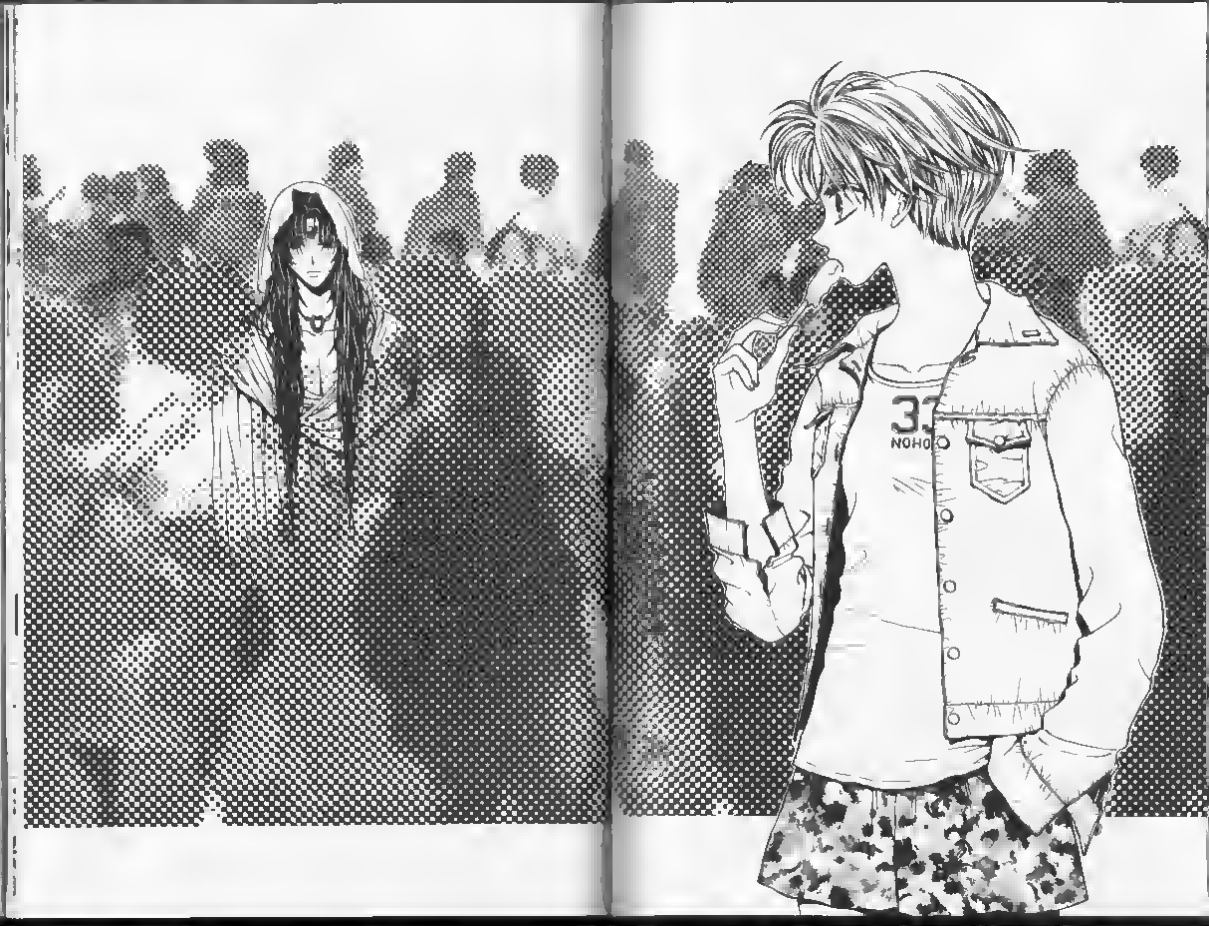
A LETTER FROM HOME YOU'RE TO TAKE PART IN THE ANCESTRAL RITES THIS YEAR
HERE ARE THE TRAIN TICKETS
ARE YOU GOING, TOO?
WE'RE LEAVING ON
I AM THANKS TO YOU
TO MAKE SURE YOU COME LUCKY ME I HAVE THE SEAT RIGHT NEXT TO YOU

WHAT'S WITH THE FACE?
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M CRAZY ABOUT GOING ANYWHERE WITH YOU UNLIKE YOUR LITTLE FAN THERE
BUT THE ELDERS COMMAND IT, SO I MUST GO, YES?
YOU'RE THE GOLDEN CHILD, AFTER ALL SO I GET TO DROP EVERYTHING AND COME DRAG YOU HOME

STOP DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT SKIPPING OUT ON ME. I HATE TO INCONVENIENCE YOU, BUT I DON'T WANT TO GET IN ANY TROUBLE
MI-RU SHIN
I WON'T SKIP OUT I REALLY DON'T MIND GOING WITH YOU
OH? YOU DON'T? HOW VERY NOBLE OF YOU IT MAKES ME SICK!

WHAT'S HER PROBLEM?
SHE'S MY SISTER
Y YOU DON'T SAY
WELL, SHE'S MY HALF-SISTER SAME FATHER, DIFFERENT MOTHERS

WHAT? YOU CAN'T GO ON THE FIELD TRIP?
AW. COME ON THIS IS THE ONLY FIELD TRIP IN JUNIOR HIGH AND YOU'RE GOING TO MISS IT? SO YOU REALLY HAVE TO GO HOME INSTEAD?
I SO THE FIELD TRIP JUST ISN'T ALL THAT IMPORTANT COMPARED TO THE ANCESTRAL RITES
THAT SUCKS. I WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO YOU DOING THAT CARD TRICK
DON'T EVEN GET ME STARTED! ALL THAT WORK AND WE DON'T EVEN GET TO DO THE TRICK WE SO WOULD HAVE WON TOO
MY HANDS ARE TIED! CHECK MY FATHER'S WORK UP WE WERE THAT'S TRAY
So unfair


NOHO

SO STRANGE...
THAT PERSON COULD IT BE--
COSPLAY?!
SNAP
What's this doing here?
TRA LA LA LA TRA LA LA AA!
UNBELIEVABLE...
DRESSED LIKE THAT IN PUBLIC AND ALL GROWN UP WOW
두근두근
MAYBE COSPLAYING ISN'T AS BAD AS I THOUGHT

HANG ON!
H-HEY!
HA-RU!
WAI--
ARE YOU NUTS JUMPING INTO THE STREET LIKE THAT? THAT BUS ALMOST FLATTENED YOU
HA-RU? ARE YOU OKAY?
HE'S GONE

WHAT...?
JUST WHO WAS THAT MAN?
HE LOOKED SO SAD...

HUH?
TEARS?
YIKES!
THAT WAS SO STRANGE, LIKE I WAS POSSESSED BY SOMETHING JUST THEN...
I HAD NO IDEA THEN WHAT THAT MEETING WOULD MEAN

HOW COULD I HAVE?

HEEEER
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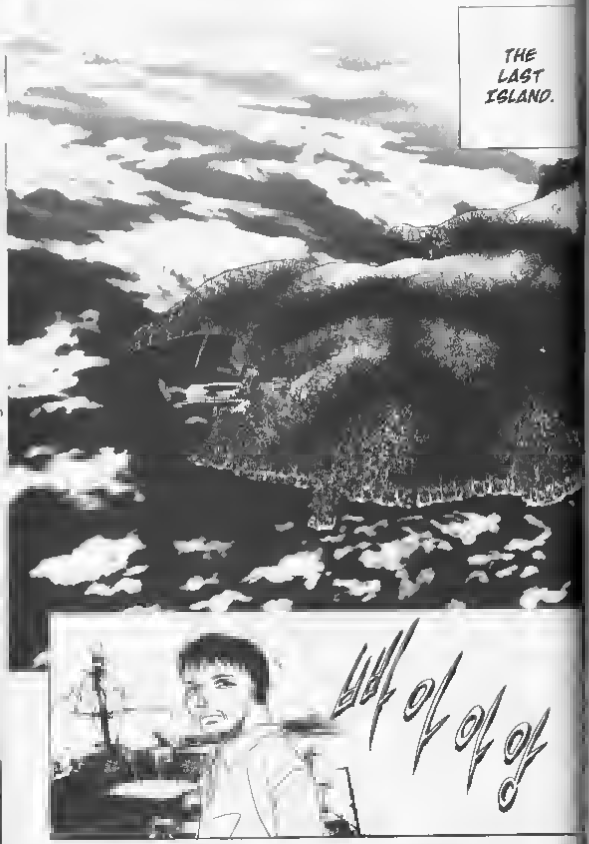
UH, WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING HERE? AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE ON THE FIELD TRIP?
TEE HEE HEE!
Look! The ocean!
Look! A boat!
FIELD TRIP? WE DITCHED! HOW COULD WE EVEN CONSIDER GOING ON A FIELD TRIP WHEN OUR BEST FRIEND BEGS US TO GO HOME WITH HER? ♡
YEAH, WE CAN GO TO KYUNG JU IN HIGH SCHOOL BESIDES, I HEARD YOUR HOUSE IS ON SOME UNCHARTED ISLAND! USER-MYSTERIOUS, AND DEFINITELY WAY COOLER THAN A FIELD TRIP!
Uh... I don't remember begging
We even brought our camping gear
Sparkle, too!
THIS IS SO AWESOME! IT'S LIKE WE'RE GOING TO SOME SECRET HIDIN' OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE ♡
I HEARD THE CAPTAIN CALL IT "THE LAST ISLAND." CREEPY, HUH? SOUNDS SO PRIMITIVE ♡
HEH. PRIMITIVE. I WOULDN'T MIND GIVING THE OLD PASHIMEE BATH A SHOT ♡

IT'S TOO LATE TO SEND YOU BACK SO, WELCOME ABOARD I GUESS. YOU MAY BE IN FOR A FEW SURPRISES
I DON'T THINK IT'S THAT PRIMITIVE
DON'T WORRY! I CAN HANDLE ANYTHING EVEN MASSOYE IN THE OUTHOUSE ♡
IS THERE ELECTRICITY?


THE LAST ISLAND.
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!!
MY LADY!
MY LADY?
MY LADY?
MY LADY?

MY LADY!
MY LADY!
ARE THEY TALKING TO YOU? WHAT'S GOING ON?
THE HEIRESS HAS ARRIVED!
WHO ARE ALL THESE PEOPLE?
AIEA

MISS, WHY HAVE YOU BEEN GONE SO LONG? MR SUN-JU AND THE YOUNG MASTER HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU TO COME BACK
STOP BAWKING! RUN AND TELL MR SUN-JU THAT THE YOUNG MISS IS HERE!
SHE LOOKS SO GROWN UP! LOOK HOW TALL..
SO YOU SUPPOSE THAT'S HER BOYFRIEND?
WHAT? OUR YOUNGEST IS HERE?
WOW, HA-RU! YOU REALLY LOOK GREAT! I JUST CAN'T GET OVER IT! THE ISLAND'S MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL HAS FINALLY RETURNED! WE HAVE MISSED YOU SO MUCH!
HA HA! THERE YOU ARE! YOU'RE LOOKING PRETTY AND ADORABLE AS EVER! IT SEEMS LIKE YOU'VE BEEN GONE FOREVER! HAVE YOU BEEN ENJOYING SEOUL?

UH, YOU'RE MAKING ME DIZZY
HEY! GET OUT OF THE WAY! OUR PRINCESS IS COMING THROUGH!
SERIOUSLY, PUT HA DOWN BEFORE I FAINT
YOU TWO MUST BE HA-RU'S FRIENDS I'M HA-MIN, HER SECOND OLDEST AND LESS EXCITABLE BROTHER
WELCOME TO THE LAST ISLAND! I'M GLAD YOU CAME
A shiver ran down my spine for some reason
NGH...
TH-THANKS FOR HAVING US...
AH, MI-RU THERE YOU ARE
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME, HA-MIN
THANK YOU FOR REMINDING HA-RU THAT WAS AWFUL NICE OF YOU
TODAY'S ANCESTRAL RITE IS SPECIAL SO YOU SHOULD PARTICIPATE
YES WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT-

MI-RU...
MISS HA-RU HAS FINALLY RETURNED! LET THE CELEBRATION BEGIN!
I THOUGHT WE WERE HERE FOR ANCESTRAL RITES. WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A CELEBRATION?
OUR HOUSEHOLD'S RITES ARE KIND OF A CELEBRATION FOR THE WHOLE ISLAND! IT'S ALMOST MORE PARTY THAN IT IS ANCESTRAL RITES!
IT'S A LOT OF FUN. A SHAMAN COMES AND THERE'S A PROPITIATION DANCE. TOURISTS EVEN COME SOMETIMES.
HA-RU, LET'S GO. WE'VE GOT TO GET YOU READY!
COMING!
ARE YOU DOING SOMETHING?
I've been trying to avoid it. Wow.
I HAVE TO DO THE PROPITIATION DANCE. DONE BY GIRLS OF FIFTEEN.
HEY. SORRY TO HAVE TO PITCH YOU GO SOON, GUYS. BUT I HAVE TO GO GET READY. THE MAID WILL TAKE YOU GUYS UP TO THE HOUSE.

SORRY! I'LL SEE YOU LATER UP AT THE HOUSE!
UH, DONG-HI? YOU GETTING A TWILIGHT ZONE VIBE AT ALL?
YOU BET I AM.
HERE?
YOU CALL THIS A HOUSE? MORE LIKE A MANSION.

ALL RIGHT I'LL CONFESS

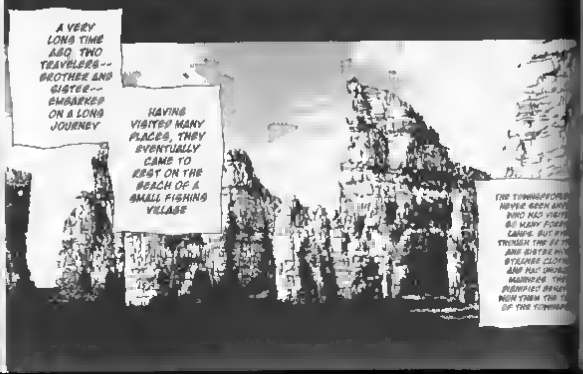
MY FAMILY IS RICH.
JEEZ, YA THINK?!

EVERY ROOM IS FILLED WITH ANTIQUES, ♡ LUNCH IS A NINE COURSE MEAL AND THERE'S A MAID STANDING OUTSIDE THE DOOR READY TO WAIT ON US ♡ I THINK THE BOAT CRASHED AND WE WENT TO HEAVEN! ♡
JUST THIS ONE ROOM IS BIGGER THAN MY DORM ROOM ♡ AND EVERYONE'S CALLING ME "YOUNG MASTER" AND JOON-HEE "YOUNG MISS" ♡ IT'S TOO MUCH! ♡

HERE I THOUGHT I'D BE GOING TO AN OUTHOUSE, BUT INSTEAD I GET A FLUSH TOILET AND A BIDET!
IS THAT WHAT THAT WATER FOUNTAIN NEXT TO THE TOILET WAS? HA! I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE IN MY LIFE
I turned it on and got soaked!
HA HA HA HA
OKAY, OKAY... LET ME EXPLAIN!
Ooh. Harru. This place is way too good for us
Ah, ha ha... way too good

SO YOUR FAMILY OWNS THE WHOLE ISLAND?
EVEN THE BOATS IN THE HARBOR?
PRETTY MUCH MOST OF THE BOATS ARE OURS
SO THAT'S WHY EVERYONE WAS GOING NUTS WITH "MY LADY" THIS AND "MY LADY" THAT
WELL, I THINK THAT'S MORE BECAUSE I'M THE HEIR.
THE HEIR?
YES.
FOR GENERATIONS, THE WOMEN HAVE INHERITED THE FAMILY BUSINESS. IT'S THE CUSTOM IN A FISHING VILLAGE LIKE THIS
SO OFTEN THE MEN GO OUT TO FISH AND GET LOST AT SEA. THE WOMEN STAY HERE AND HOLD DOWN THE FORT AT HOME. IT'S JUST THE WAY IT IS.

THAT'S THE OUTSIDE VIEW, ANYWAY.
THE TRUTH IS THERE'S AN OLD LEGEND THAT ONLY THE PEOPLE ON THE ISLAND KNOW ABOUT
REALLY? CAN YOU TELL US?
YEAH, TELL US THE LEGEND OF THE LAST ISLAND!
FIRST, A DRINK


A VERY LONG TIME AGO, TWO TRAVELERS-- BROTHER AND SISTER-- EMBARKED ON A LONG JOURNEY
HAVING VISITED MANY PLACES, THEY EVENTUALLY CAME TO REST ON THE BEACH OF A SMALL FISHING VILLAGE

THE SISTER WAS INTELLIGENT AND WITTY, AND THE BROTHER STRONG AND COURAGEOUS SOON THEY BECAME INVALUABLE TO THE TOWN-- CONSIDERED LEADERS EVEN
EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE HAPPY, THE BROTHER WAS A WANDERER AT HEART AND DREAMED OF ROAMING THE EARTH AGAIN.
HIS SISTER, ALONG WITH THE TOWNSFOLK, TRIED TO CONVINCE HIM TO STAY, BUT HE COULDN'T DENY THE PULL OF THE OPEN SEA
HE LEFT, PROMISING HIS SISTER HE'D RETURN WITHIN THREE YEARS HE NEVER DID
UNABLE TO LIVE WITHOUT HIM, THE SISTER LEFT TO SEARCH FOR HIM. SHE NEVER FOUND HIM INSTEAD, SHE STAYED ON THE LAST ISLAND, AND DIED

MY FAMILY IS DESCENDED FROM THAT SISTER. THE FIRST PERSON TO SET FOOT ON THE LAST ISLAND. IN HONOR OF HER, THE WOMAN IN THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD HERE
OH. I THOUGHT IT WAS GOING TO BE SOME SWEEPING LOVE STORY. BUT IT'S JUST ABOUT A BROTHER AND SISTER BOORING!
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? SHE WANDERED THE EARTH LOOKING FOR HIM UNTIL SHE DIED!
BESIDES, THIS HAPPENED A LONG TIME AGO. THEY COULD HAVE BEEN LOVERS
I LIKE TO THINK THEY WERE. IT'S ROMANTIC AND TRAGIC THAT WAY.
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING THAT'S ALWAYS PUZZLED ME ABOUT THAT STORY. WE ARE DESCENDED FROM HIM, WHICH MEANS SHE MUST HAVE LEFT HER CHILDREN BEHIND TO SEARCH FOR HER BROTHER.

WHY DID SHE LEAVE THE REST OF HER FAMILY BEHIND TO FIND HIM, ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING HE'D ABANDONED HER TO BEGIN WITH?

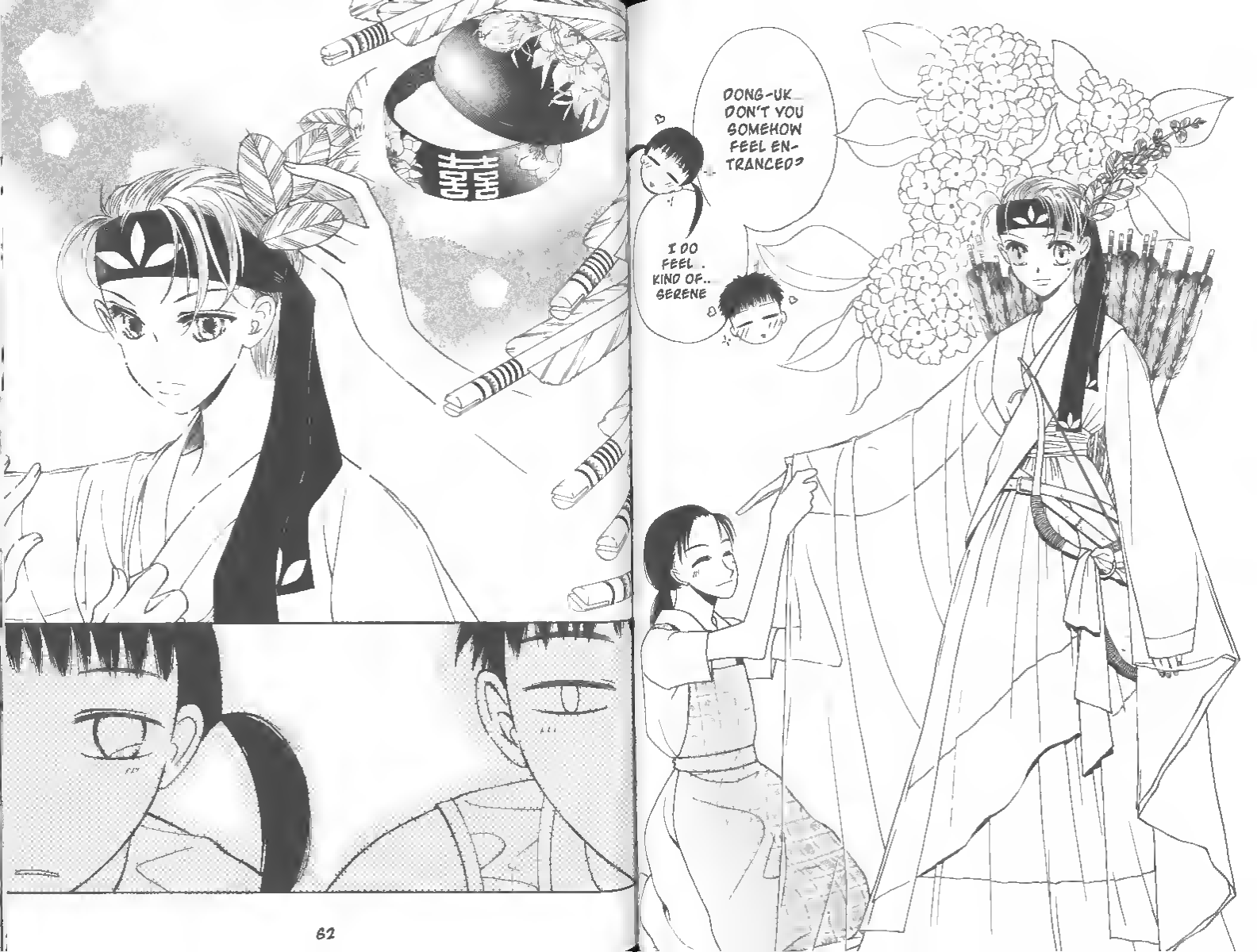
WELL...
I GUESS IT'S NO USE WONDERING ABOUT LONG DEAD ANCESTORS
AH HA HA HA HA!
HEY! THAT'S MY PHOTO ALBUM!
THE OLD LADY AT THE TEMPLE IS DEAD?
YES, SIR. THE WOMAN WHO LIVES BELOW HER FOUND HER THIS MORNING. SHE SEEMS TO HAVE DIED OF OLD AGE.
DOES MI-EU KNOW?
THE SECOND LADY IS STANDING GUARD AT THE MORTUARY. SHE LOOKS MISERABLE. I BELIEVE SHE WAS MI-EU'S MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER.
SHE WAS. WHY ARE WE BURDENED WITH SUCH UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE RIGHT BEFORE THE ANCESTRAL RITES? PLEASE SEE THAT MI-EU IS ATTENDED TO
YES, I WILL.

PERHAPS NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO MENTION--
THE DEATH OF MI-EU'S GRANDMOTHER IS SURE TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE ISSUE OF SUCCESSION. FORGIVE MY SAYING, BUT IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO STRENGTHEN YOUR RESOLVE AND DO WHAT YOU MUST
I AM AWARE THAT MI-EU MUST BE...LOYALTY WITH
MI-EU IS YOUR DAUGHTER AND YOU'VE GROWN ATTACHED TO HER. YOU FEEL SORRY BECAUSE YOU WANT TO GIVE HER EVERYTHING, BUT BECAUSE OF HER MOTHER'S ROLE, YOU CANNOT
YOU MUST DETACH YOURSELF FROM HER, AND I WORRY THAT YOU MAY FAIL AT THIS
BUT SHE IS MY FLESH AND BLOOD. I'M NOT SURE I CAN GO THROUGH WITH IT
UNFORTUNATELY, THE PEOPLE KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, AND YOU CAN'T STALL ANYMORE. A DECISION MUST BE MADE. BUT I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT THE TOWNSFOLK. WHAT CONCERNS ME MOST...
IF YOU NEED AN INCENTIVE, CONSIDER THE MISTRESS. WHEN SHE DIED, SHE PUT HER TRUST IN MISS HA-EU. IT IS FOR YOUR DEPARTED WIFE THAT YOU MUST HARDEN YOUR RESOLVE
I UNDERSTAND, SIR.
...IS YOU, SIR.
THIS MUST BE DONE FOR HA-EU AND MI-EU BOTH. IT IS UNFAIR TO LET THEM ANGUISH OVER WHO IS TO BECOME HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

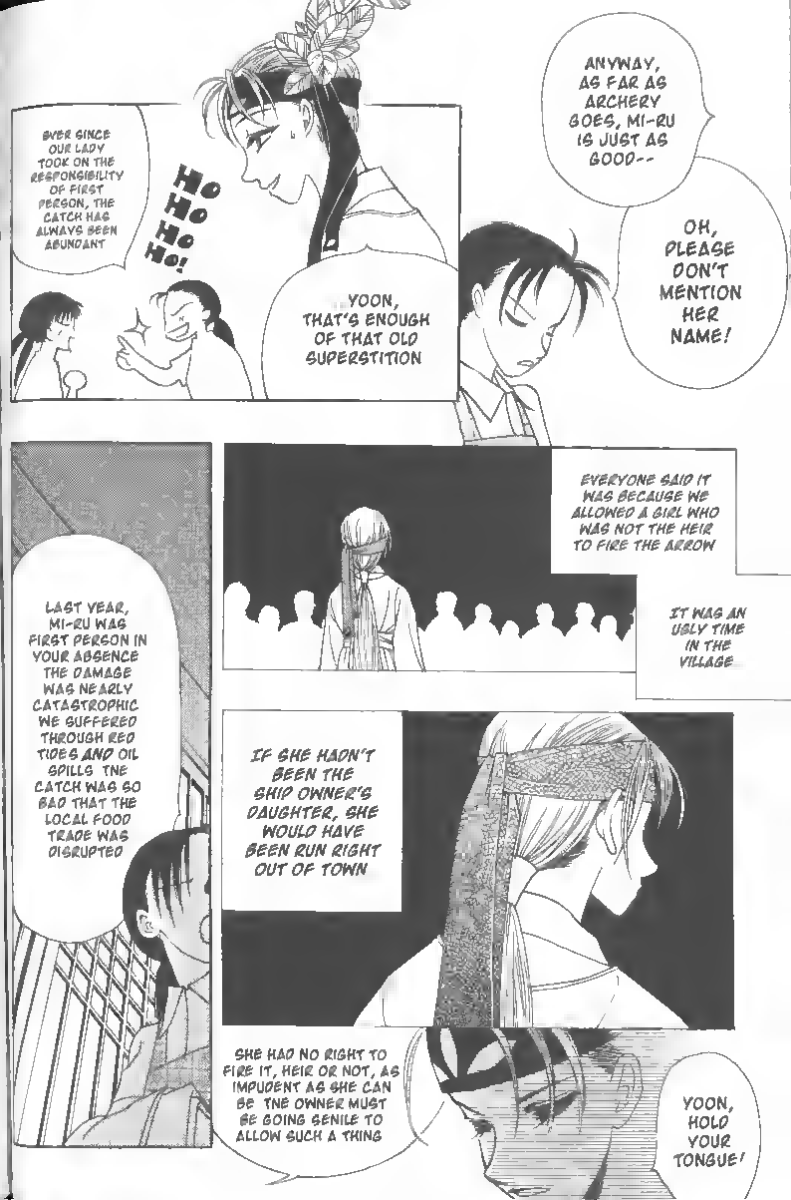
SIR, ONCE THE ANCESTRAL RITE IS OVER, YOU MUST SEND MI-RU AWAY FROM THE LAST ISLAND
..I KNOW.

SHOOTING AN ARROW IS A LOT LIKE PRAYING.
THE MOMENT IT LEAVES THE BOW...

...THE ARROW IS IN THE HANDS OF THE GODS.

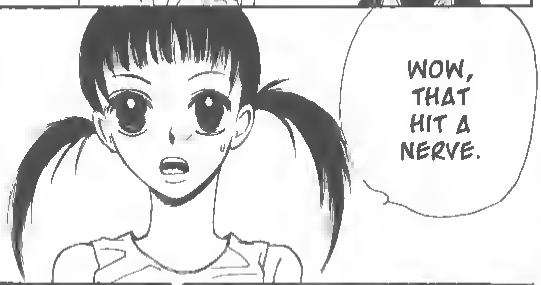

DONG-UK... DON'T YOU SOMEHOW FEEL EN-TRANCED?
I DO FEEL . KIND OF.. SERENE

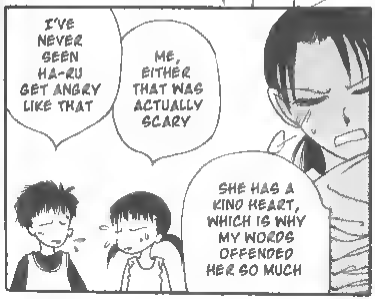
HA-RU, YOU LOOK AMAZING! LIKE A BRAVE AND FEARSOME KNIGHT!
UH, BUT DO YOU HAVE TO DANCE IN THAT? THAT OUTFIT LOOKS A TAD RESTRICTING
IT TURNS OUT I WON'T BE DANCING AFTER ALL I'M THE FIRST PERSON THIS YEAR
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
THE FIRST PERSON ANNOUNCES THE FESTIVITIES BY FIRING THE FIRST ARROW
THAT SOUNDS LIKE AN IMPORTANT JOB.
IT IS, AND MORE THAN YOU KNOW
THE SUCCESS OF THE FIRST SHOT DETERMINES HOW BOUNTIFUL THE FISHING YEAR WILL BE
I SEE.
THAT'S WHY DURING THE ANCESTRAL RITE, ALL THE NEIGHBORHOOD FISHING BOATS FIND THEIR WAY HERE


EVER SINCE OUR LADY TOOK ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF FIRST PERSON, THE CATCH HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABUNDANT
HOHOHO!
YOON, THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT OLD SUPERSTITION
ANYWAY, AS FAR AS ARCHERY GOES, MI-RU IS JUST AS GOOD--
OH, PLEASE DON'T MENTION HER NAME!
LAST YEAR, MI-RU WAS FIRST PERSON IN YOUR ABSENCE THE DAMAGE WAS NEARLY CATASTROPHIC WE SUFFERED THROUGH RED TIDES AND OIL SPILLS THE CATCH WAS SO BAD THAT THE LOCAL FOOD TRADE WAS DISRUPTED
EVERYONE SAID IT WAS BECAUSE WE ALLOWED A GIRL WHO WAS NOT THE HEIR TO FIRE THE ARROW
IT WAS AN UGLY TIME IN THE VILLAGE
IF SHE HADN'T BEEN THE SHIP OWNER'S DAUGHTER, SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN RUN RIGHT OUT OF TOWN
SHE HAD NO RIGHT TO FIRE IT, HEIR OR NOT, AS IMPUDENT AS SHE CAN BE THE OWNER MUST BE GOING SENILE TO ALLOW SUCH A THING
YOON, HOLD YOUR TONGUE!

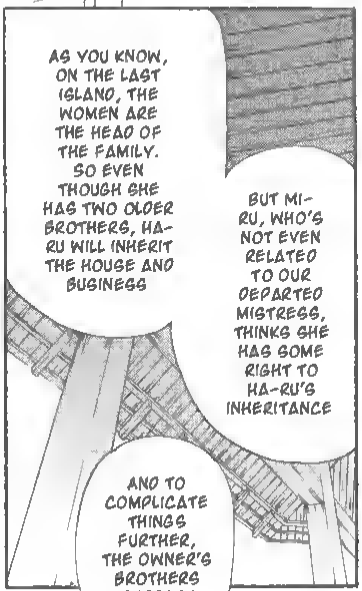
WHAT-EVER THE CIRCUM-STANCE, MI-RU IS A PART OF THIS FAMILY.
I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO SPEAK OF HER SO!
APOLOGIZE IMMEDIATELY!
OH MY!

I'M VERY SORRY, MY LADY!
I'VE OVERSTEPPED MY BOUNDS...
...
...


WOW, THAT HIT A NERVE.

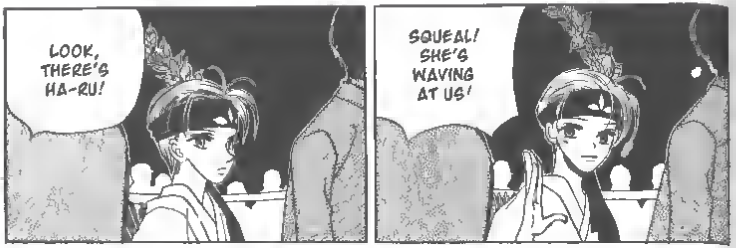

I'VE NEVER SEEN HA-RU GET ANGRY LIKE THAT
ME, EITHER THAT WAS ACTUALLY SCARY
SHE HAS A KIND HEART, WHICH IS WHY MY WORDS OFFENDED HER SO MUCH

MI-RU IS THE OWNER'S ILLEGITIMATE CHILD. HER MOTHER WAS FROM OUTSIDE THE HOUSEHOLD

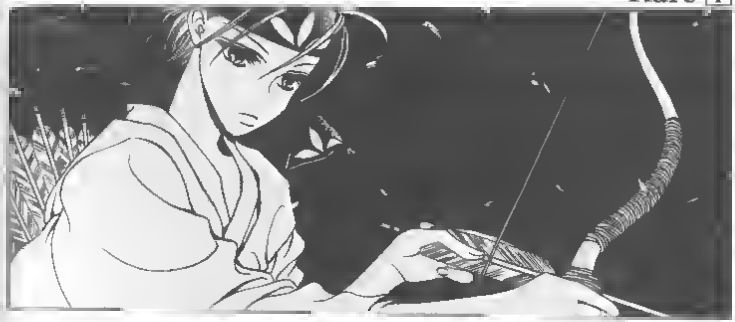

AS YOU KNOW, ON THE LAST ISLAND, THE WOMEN ARE THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY. SO EVEN THOUGH SHE HAS TWO OLDER BROTHERS, HA-RU WILL INHERIT THE HOUSE AND BUSINESS
BUT MI-RU, WHO'S NOT EVEN RELATED TO OUR DEPARTED MISTRESS, THINKS SHE HAS SOME RIGHT TO HA-RU'S INHERITANCE
AND TO COMPLICATE THINGS FURTHER, THE OWNER'S BROTHERS SUPPORT MI-RU

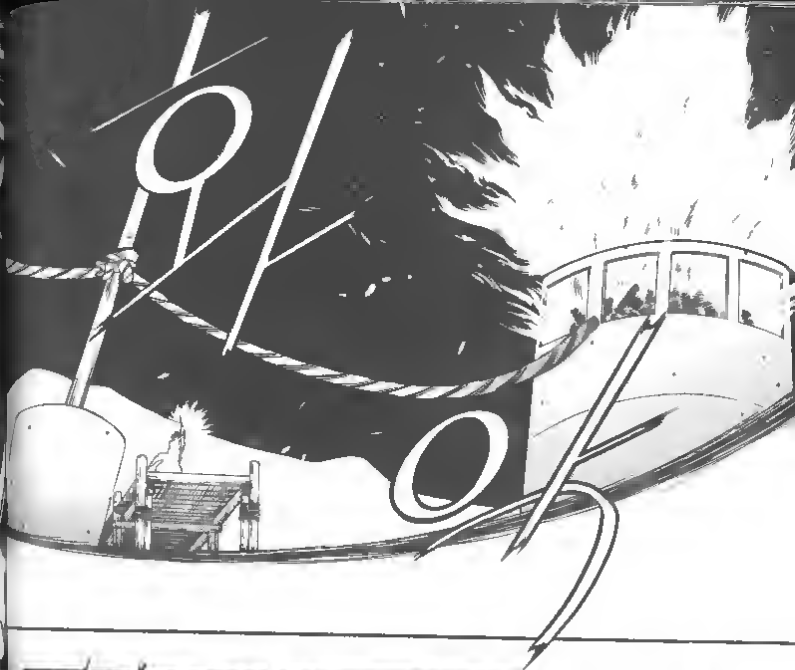
THEY SAY THAT MI-RU HAS A MIND FOR THE BUSINESS, BUT THEY'RE JUST SUPPORTING HER NOW SO THAT THEY CAN PUPPETEER AND EXPLOIT HER LATER
THE ISLAND PEOPLE PRETEND NOT TO KNOW THAT HA-RU'S UNCLES WANT TO SUPPLANT HER BUT WE KNOW, AND WE SUPPORT HA-RU AS DO HER OLDER BROTHERS SHE IS THE ONLY LEGITIMATE HEIR, AFTER ALL
IF OUR MISTRESS WERE STILL ALIVE, IT WOULDN'T EVEN BE AN ISSUE HA-RU WOULD BE HEIR AND THAT WOULD BE THAT BUT INSTEAD, SHE HAS TO ENDURE THE FALLOUT FROM THE VICIOUS POLITICS GOING ON BEHIND CLOSED DOORS
I'VE PROBABLY OVERSTEPPED MY BOUNDS AGAIN BY TELLING YOU ALL THIS PLEASE DON'T TELL MY LADY I DON'T WANT TO MAKE HER ANGRY AGAIN SHE CARES FOR MI-RU VERY MUCH

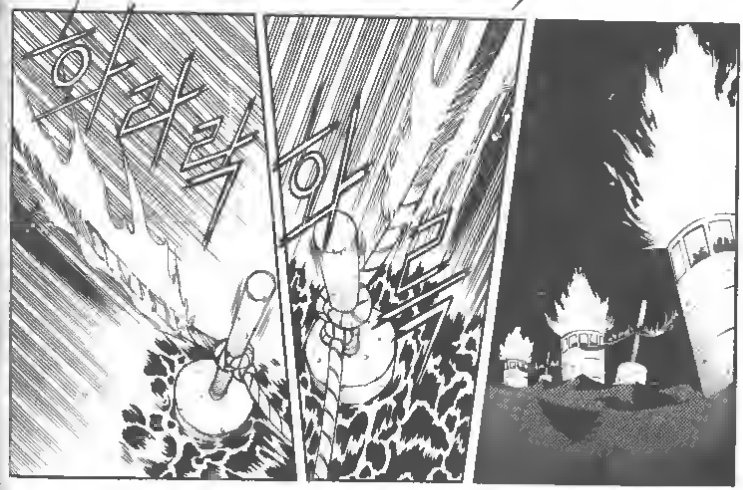
I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW BIG THIS CELEBRATION IS--ALL FOR HA-RU'S ANCESTRAL RITES THEY'VE GOT FIREWORKS AND EVERYTHING!
OOH! LOOK, I THINK IT'S STARTING!


LOOK, THERE'S HA-RU!
SQUEAL! SHE'S WAVING AT US!

HURRAY FOR HA-RU!



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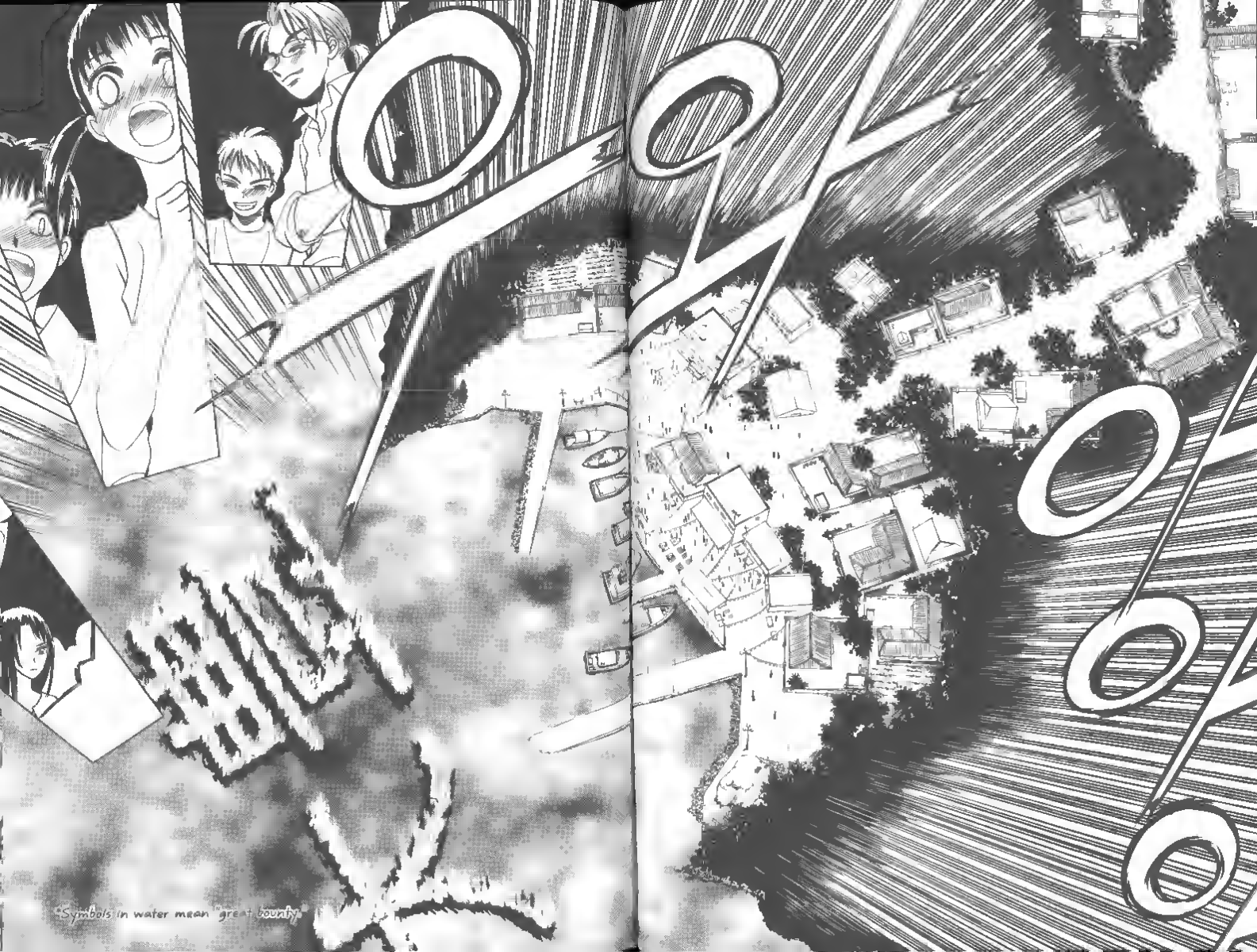
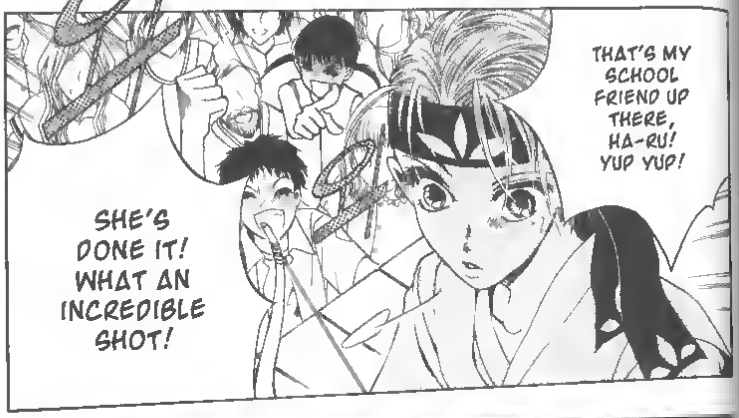

OH
OH
*Symbols in water mean "great bounty."


SHE'S DONE IT! WHAT AN INCREDIBLE SHOT!
THAT'S MY SCHOOL FRIEND UP THERE, HA-RU! YUP YUP!

WITH A SHOT LIKE THAT, THE LAST ISLAND WILL HAVE A GREAT YEAR!
WE'LL NEED IT TO RECOUP OUR LOSSES FROM LAST YEAR.
WAS THERE EVER ANY DOUBT? MISS HA-RU NEVER MISSES. OOH. I THINK I'M IN LOVE... ♡
BLESSING ON THE LAST ISLAND!
HURRAY!

IT'S TIME TO PARTY!
OUR NETS WILL BE FULL OF FISH THIS YEAR! ♡

HA HA HA HA!

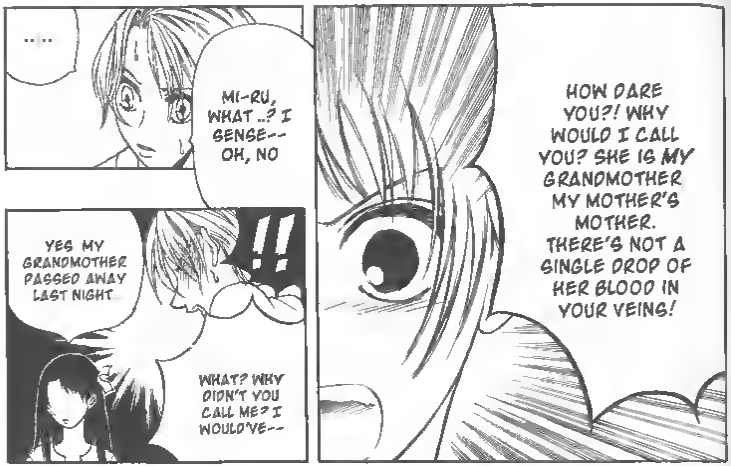
HA HA!

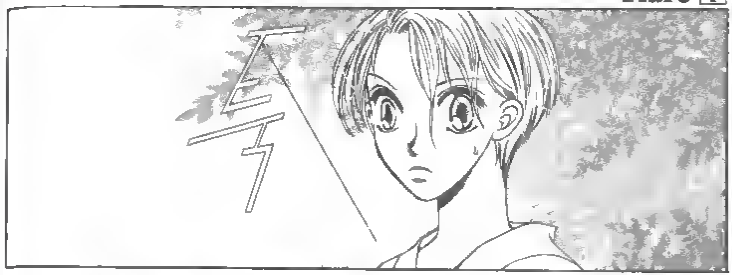
BLIP

ㅍㅗ...
WHEW...
FINALLY IT'S OVER I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY DRAGGED ME BACK HERE TO DO THIS AGAIN SO MUCH PRESSURE IF I COULD EVER MEET THE PERSON THAT CAME UP WITH THIS RIDICULOUS RITUAL, I'D KNOCK HIS TEETH OUT
IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL I MISS
UNLIKELY YOUR SKILLS ARE AS GOOD AS EVER.

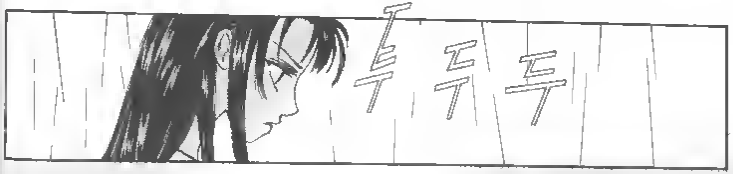
MI-RU...

BUT THAT'S JUST THE WAY YOU ARE
YOU DESIRE NOTHING, AND YET YOU HAVE EVERYTHING WITHOUT EVEN TRYING. YOU'D RATHER BE WANDERING AROUND SEOUL THAN FULFILLING YOUR BIRTHRIGHT
AND I WOULD BE HONORED TO STAY HERE AND RUN THE BUSINESS. SADLY, IT WILL ALL GO TO YOU IN THE END


……
MI-RU, WHAT ..? I SENSE-- OH, NO
!!
YES MY GRANDMOTHER PASSED AWAY LAST NIGHT
WHAT? WHY DIDN'T YOU CALL ME? I WOULD'VE--
HOW DARE YOU?! WHY WOULD I CALL YOU? SHE IS MY GRANDMOTHER MY MOTHER'S MOTHER. THERE'S NOT A SINGLE DROP OF HER BLOOD IN YOUR VEINS!



YES MY GRANDMOTHER.



AND YET, AT THE END OF HER LIFE…SHE CALLED YOUR NAME INSTEAD OF MINE.

I WISH YOU WERE DEAD, HA-RU!
I'M HER FLESH AND BLOOD AND SHE YET CALLED OUT FOR YOU!
AT LEAST I THOUGHT SHE WAS. IT TURNS OUT...I DIDN'T HAVE ANYONE, AFTER ALL.
YOU DIDN'T NEED HER LOVE, BUT YOU TOOK IT ANYWAY!
OUR FATHER, OUR BROTHERS, AND YES, EVEN THE TOWNSPEOPLE FAVOR YOU OVER ME YOU ARE THE BELOVED OF ALL--THE GOLDEN CHILD! MY GRANDMOTHER WAS ALL I HAD!
HA-RU, WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE IN THIS POURING RAIN?! YOU'LL GET SOAKED!
HA-RU, IS THAT YOU?
HA-MIN..
COME NOW EVERYONE IS GATHERED FOR THE FAMILY MEETING EXCEPT YOU YOU NEED TO GET CHANGED OUT OF THOSE WET CLOTHES RIGHT AWAY!

YES, I'M COMING
MI-RU, YOU BETTER COME AS WELL. THE MEETING IS HAPPENING BECAUSE OF YOU, AFTER ALL.

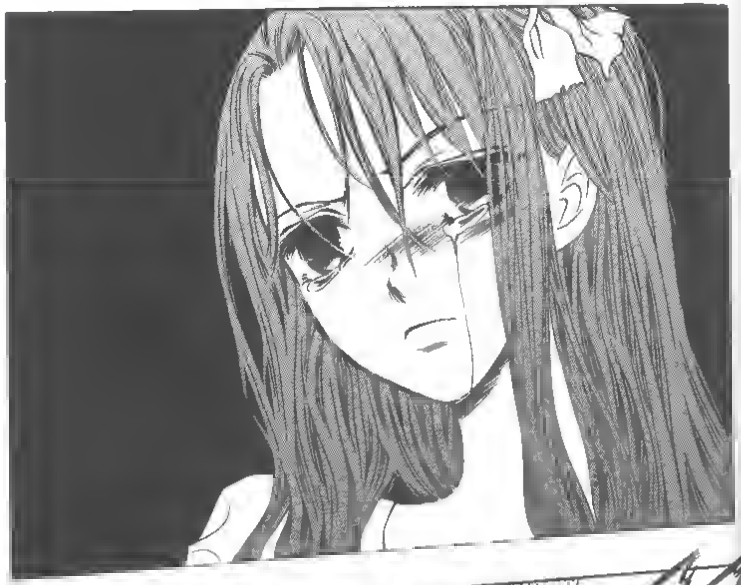
LET'S GET YOU INSIDE, HA-RU WE DON'T WANT YOU CATCHING A COLD
QUIT HOVERING I'M FINE!

AND DON'T BE SO HARD ON MI-RU SHE'S *YOUR* SISTER, TOO
HA-MIN!
WHO IS? *YOU'RE* MY ONLY SISTER, HA-RU

WHAT? GET IT THROUGH YOUR SKULL, HA-RU SHE'S FATHER'S ILLEGITIMATE CHILD, HARDLY PART OF THE FAMILY DON'T WASTE YOUR SYMPATHY ON HER SHE'S NOTHING!
IT'S BAD ENOUGH OUR UNCLES CONSIDER HER PART OF THE FAMILY. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF OUR ISLAND THAT MATERNAL LINEAGE IS BEING QUESTIONED. YOU SHOULD BE AS ANGRY ABOUT THIS AS WE ARE.
ELDER BROTHER, PLEASE CONSIDER WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO DO. ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO JUST HAND EVERYTHING OVER TO HA-RU?
AND WHAT OF YOUR SONS? AREN'T HA-JIN AND HA-MIN MEMBERS OF THIS FAMILY, AS WELL?

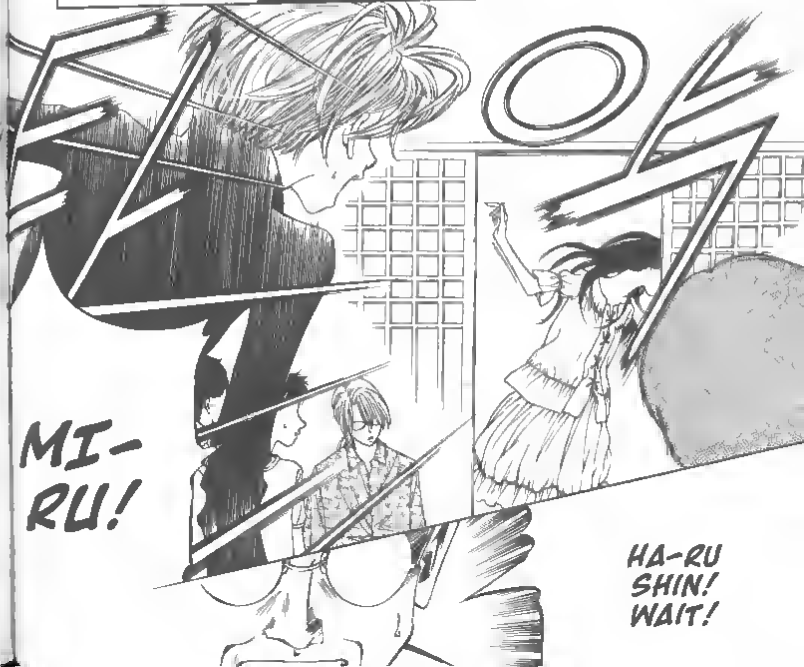
WE UNDERSTAND MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE COULD HOW HARD IT WAS FOR YOU WHEN YOUR WIFE DIED. BUT WE STOOD BY YOU, AND WITH OUR HELP YOU WEATHERED THE STORM.
REMEMBER HOW THE TOWNSFOLK WERE IN AN UPROAR, WORRIED ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WITH A MAN RUNNING THE BUSINESS? BUT LOOK HOW THIS FAMILY HAS FLOURISHED, AND THE LAST ISLAND ALONG WITH IT!
WE BELIEVE YOU'VE PROVEN THAT ALLOWING ONLY WOMEN TO INHERIT THE HOUSEHOLD IS NOTHING BUT AN OUT-DATED SUPERSTITION
IS IT RIGHT THAT THE MEN OF THIS FAMILY SHOULD WORK LIKE DOGS WHILE THE SHIN FAMILY BENEFITS FROM THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR?
MI-RU BEARS YOUR NAME, AND YOU HAVE SHOWN THAT THE SUNG NAME IS A WORTHY ONE SHOULDN'T MI-RU BE ABLE TO CARRY ON THE LEGACY THAT YOU'VE ESTABLISHED?
UNCLE, SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU GIVEN A DAMN ABOUT HOUSEHOLD AFFAIRS? ISN'T IT CONVENIENT THAT YOU BECOME INTERESTED WHEN YOU THINK YOU CAN SEIZE POWER FOR YOUR SIDE OF THE FAMILY?
HOLD YOUR TONGUE, CHILD! HAVE SOME RESPECT FOR YOUR ELDERS!
YOU COME IN HERE PRETENDING TO ACT ON MI-RU'S BEHALF, BUT ALL YOU REALLY WANT IS TO SECURE POWER FOR THE SUNG NAME ACT LIKE AN ELDER AND MAYBE YOU'LL GET MY RESPECT!
THIS KID DOESN'T KNOW WHEN TO KEEP HIS MOUTH SHUT!
SILENCE! I HAVE ALREADY MADE MY DECISION ON THIS MATTER
HA-RU STARTING TODAY, YOU ARE THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD
WHAT?! HOW CAN YOU HAVE DECIDED ALREADY? HA-RU IS FAR TOO YOUNG!
YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS WE WILL NEVER ACKNOWLEDGE HER!
FATHER! HA-RU IS NOT READY! THIS IS TOO SOON!
MY DECISION IS FINAL I AM WEARY OF THE BICKERING THIS MATTER HAS CAUSED HA-RU WILL BE THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD IN ACCORDANCE WITH HER MOTHER'S WISHES
HA-RU WILL MOVE HER BELONGINGS INTO THE MAIN ROOM TOMORROW AND MI-RU WILL BEGIN HER STUDY ABROAD
WHAT? FATHER, YOU'VE NEVER SAID ANYTHING ABOUT MI-RU LEAVING! YOU'RE NOT SENDING HER AWAY BECAUSE OF ME, ARE YOU?
MI-RU...

DID YOU CATCH ALL THAT?
GOOD. THEN WE DON'T HAVE TO FILL YOU IN
YOU CAN GO ANYWHERE YOU LIKE TO STUDY. AMERICA FRANCE, MAYBE?
YOUR LIVING EXPENSES AND TUITION WILL BE COVERED THE LONGER YOU STAY AWAY, THE BETTER
ELDER BROTHER! MI-RU IS YOUR CHILD. HOW CAN YOU TREAT HER THIS WAY?
MI-RU, DON'T WORRY! I'LL PROTECT YOU YOU TRUST ME, DON'T YOU?
UNCLE, YOU'RE PATHETIC. YOU MIGHT AS WELL JUST COME OUT WITH IT YOU WANT CONTROL OF THE INHERITANCE
SHUT YOUR MOUTH, INSOLENT CHILD!
DON'T CALL ME A CHILD WHEN YOU'RE THE ONE BEHAVING LIKE ONE!
SO, IN THE END...
...NOT ONE OF YOU IN THIS ROOM WANTS ME.



MI-RU!

DON'T--


MI-
RU!
HA-RU
SHIN!
WAIT!

FROM THIS DAY FORTH, YOU ARE THE SUCCESSOR! YOU ARE THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD!
YOU MUST ACCEPT THIS, HA-RU
NO ONE CAN TAKE YOUR PLACE. THE ISLAND, THE SEA THAT SURROUNDS IT, THE BOATS IN THE HARBOR.
EVEN THE TOWNSFOLK...
...FATHER?
THEY BELONG TO YOU NOW!

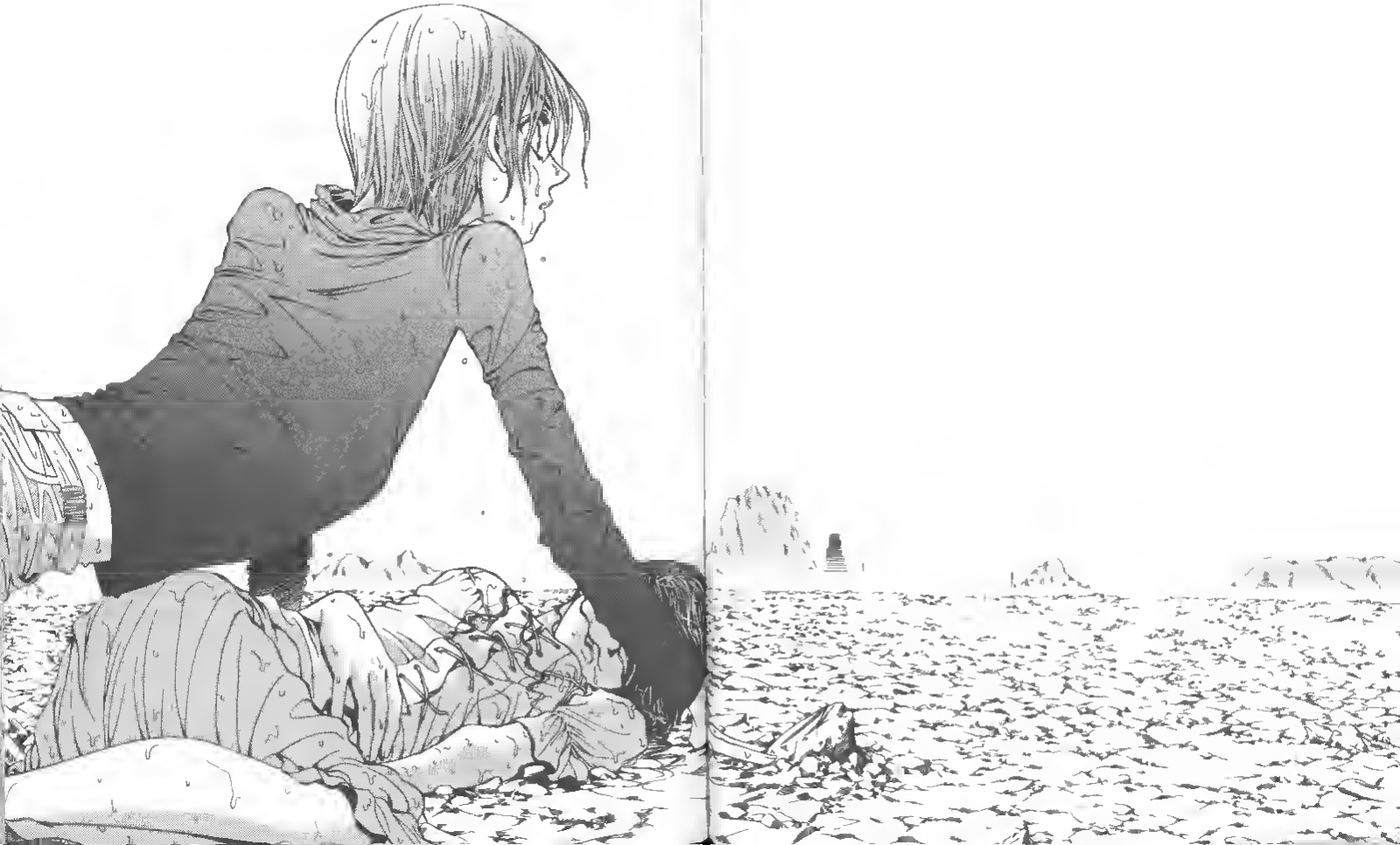
I'M SORRY, FATHER
SIR, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?! CAN YOU BREATHE?!
IT CAN'T BE... IF IT WON'T BE THAT GIRL...
NO...LEAVE ME. GO AFTER HA-RU!
HA-RU!
WHY MUST THIS HAPPEN?!
GO GET HA-RU!
WE WERE JUST STARTING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME TOO
UGH...WHY THE SUDDEN DOWNPOUR?
HA-RU!

WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHAT THE...?
FISH?

GRANDMOTHER, WHERE ARE YOU?!
GRAND-MOTHER.. GRAND-MOTHER..!
MI-RU, STOP!
TAKE ME WITH YOU, GRANDMOTHER! TAKE ME WITH YOU, PLEASE!
MI-RU! DON'T!
TAKE ME WITH YOU, GRANDMOTHER!
MI-RU...
YOU THINK NO ONE WANTS YOU?
YOU WANT TO LEAVE IT ALL BEHIND?
THEN LET'S GO TOGETHER.

HA-RU!
MI-RU!
HA-RU!
MI-RU!
GIRLS, THAT'S ENOUGH MESSING AROUND!
GIRLS! WHERE ARE YOU?!

HUH...?



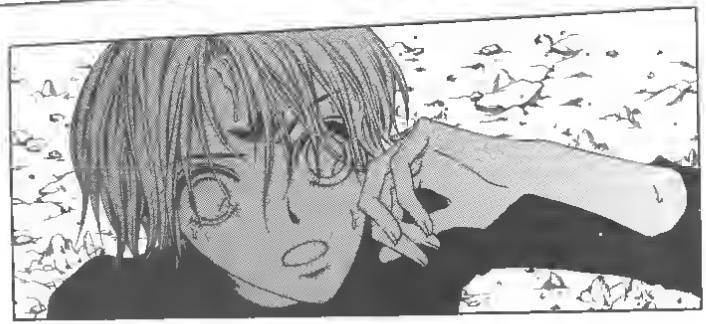
THE RED DESERT SEEMED TO GO ON FOREVER..
WHAT IN THE WORLD...?

WHERE THE HECK ARE WE?
AND LIKE SOME FANTASY NOVEL, WE'D FOUND OURSELVES IN A WHOLE NEW WORLD.

I MUST BE DREAMING OR DEAD.
GRRRRR...

KYAAA!
WHAT THE...
...HECK...
...IS THIS THING?!
SOMEONE, HELP ME! GET THIS MONSTER OFF ME!

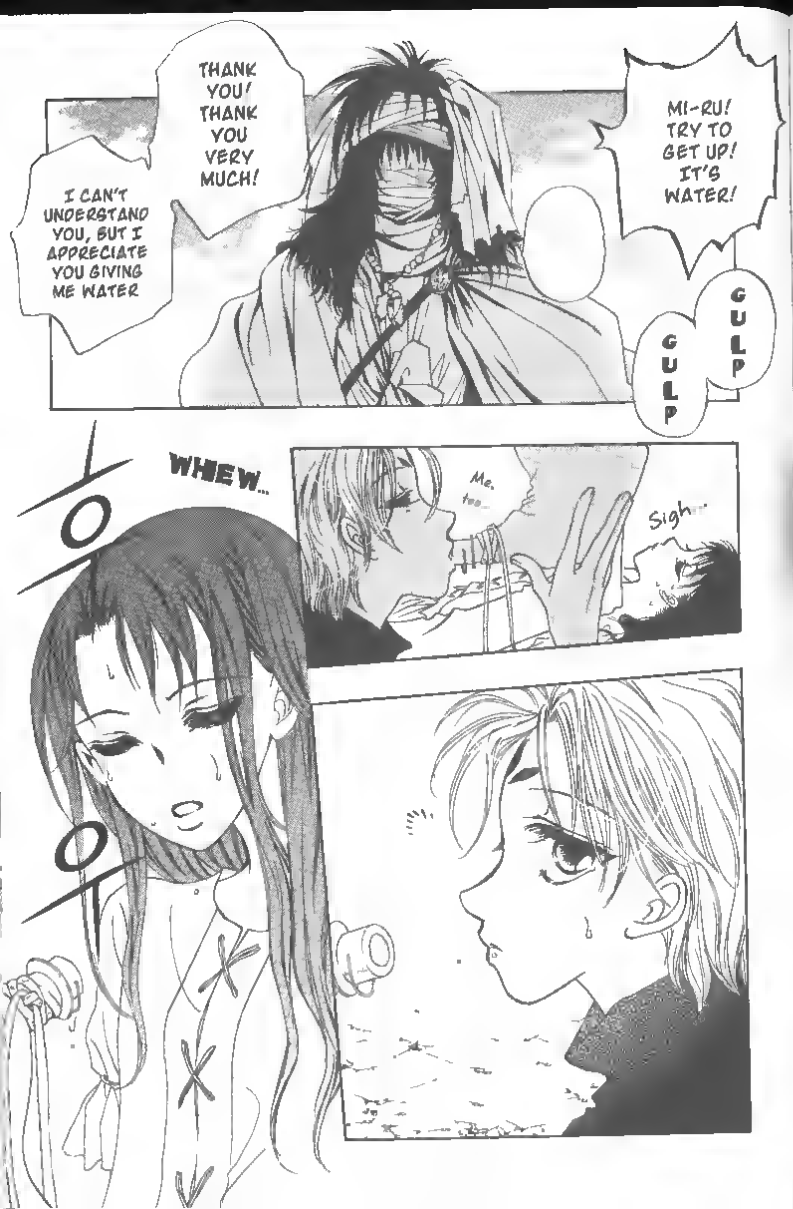
HELP ME!



ΆΙΥΏά…
ΈΉΪΉΙ?

WHO IS THIS STRANGE GUY?
UH...
HIS LANGUAGE IS LIKE NOTHING I'VE EVER HEARD...

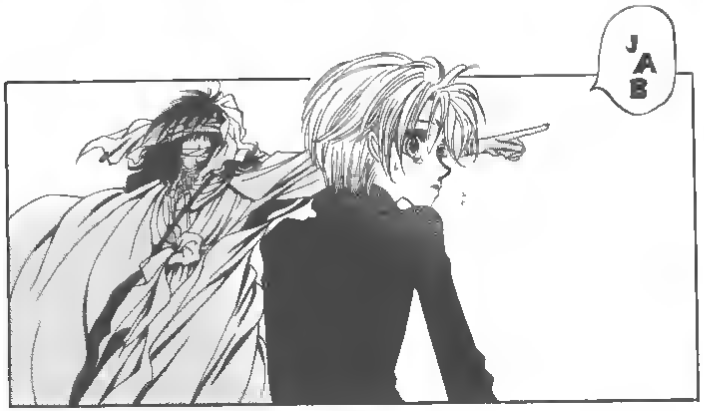
COULD IT BE ARABIC?
UGH UH...
MI-RU?! MI-RU, ARE YOU OKAY?!
WATER -- NEED WATER
JUST HANG ON, I'LL GET YOU SOME WATER!
GREAT, WHERE AM I GOING TO FIND WATER HERE?
I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF A DESERT!
WHERE'D THIS WATER COME FROM..?
"Hùóñ "Tìàðéí ΦñÄY "Hõí¤t.


I CAN'T UNDERSTAND YOU, BUT I APPRECIATE YOU GIVING ME WATER
THANK YOU! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
MI-RU! TRY TO GET UP! IT'S WATER!
GULP
GULP
WHEW...
Me, too.
Sigh...

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
성큼성큼
HEY! I'M TALKING TO YOU! WHERE ARE YOU GOING WITH HER?!
PUT HER DOWN THIS INSTANT!

HEY! GET YER HANDS OFF HER!
THAT'S MY SISTER YOU'RE KIDNAPPING! GIVE HER BACK OR ELSE!
I CAN TAKE THE DAME WHEREVER I PLEASE! I PAID FOR HER FAIR AND SQUARE!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, YOU WHACK--
HUH?! I CAN SUDDENLY UNDERSTAND HIM


JAB

DID YOU JUST FORGET OUR LITTLE TRANSACTION?
YOU GET THE WATER, I GET THE GIRL.

WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO GO BACK ON OUR DEAL?
IS THAT WHAT YOU WERE SAYING TO ME?
WATER FOR A PERSON'S LIFE?! THAT'S NOT WHAT I'D CALL A FAIR DEAL!
AND I HAD NO IDEA WHAT YOU WERE SAYING OR I WOULDN'T HAVE AGREED!
I'LL GIVE YOU BACK YOUR BOTTLE, YOU GIVE ME MI-RU AND WE'LL CALL IT EVEN. DEAL?

HMM. YOU'RE NOT FROM AROUND HERE, ARE YOU?

YOU DID SPEAK BEFORE IN A FOREIGN TONGUE.
ARE YOU AN OUTLANDER? I'VE HEARD OUTLANDERS HAVE AS MANY LANGUAGES AS THEY DO COUNTRIES.
EVEN SO, YOU'LL GET NO SPECIAL TREATMENT FROM ME.
I APOLOGIZE. I HONESTLY HAD NO IDEA HOW PRECIOUS WATER WAS!
BUT TO ME, MI-RU IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN WATER! I WILL NOT JUST HAND HER OVER!
YOU BOTH DRANK MY WATER, AND SO I MUST BE COMPENSATED.
HAND THE GIRL OVER FRANKLY SPEAKING, I'M THE ONE GETTING A RAW DEAL HERE.
VERY WELL, THEN IN THAT CASE...
...I SUPPOSE THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO SETTLE THIS
DRAW YOUR WEAPON!
WHAT?!

W-WAIT A MINUTE! DOES IT LOOK LIKE I HAVE A WEAPON?!

OH
OH
YES

!!

AHA HA HA HA! THAT'LL TEACH YOU TO MESS WITH THE STAR OF THE TAE KWON DO CLUB.
HYUCK HYUCK HYUCK
CRAP, I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S ACTUALLY SWINGING THAT THING AT ME THIS IS SERIOUS. I MAY HAVE TO REALLY FIGHT HIM!

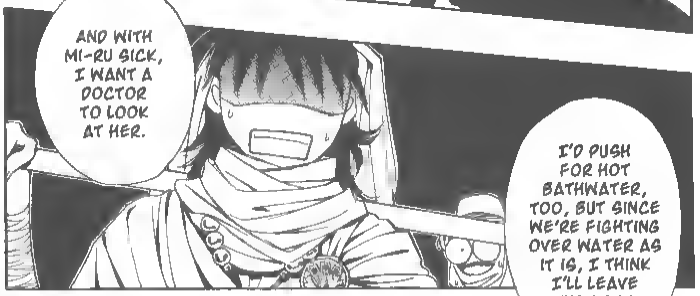
HMM. INTRIGUING. YOU'VE GOT MOVES.
BUT I THINK PLAY TIME'S OVER

LET'S GET SERIOUS!
I FORMALLY CHALLENGE YOU TO A DUEL!
.....

MY NAME IS KU-YA, MERCENARY OF SHU SA SEU!
DRAW YOUR WEAPON, WATER THIEF, AND DEFEND YOURSELF!
HOLD ON! I ALREADY TOLD YOU, I HAVE NO WEAPON!
HOW 'BOUT I LEND YOU MY SWORD, OUTLANDER? GOOD LUCK IN THE FIGHT!
Wha ha ha!
THIS KU-YA GUY MEANS BUSINESS. WHAT AM I GONNA DO?!
DO I REALLY HAVE TO FIGHT?
PICK UP THE SWORD, YOU LITTLE RUNT. YOU WANNA PROTECT THE GIRL, DON'T YOU?
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE AFRAID. I DON'T WANNA SEE A BABY WET ITS PANTS NOW.

THAT'S NOT ALL THERE IS TO IT, IS THERE?
EH?

IF I WIN AGAINST YOUR LITTLE CHALLENGE, I DEMAND CLEAN CLOTHES AND PROVISIONS IN RETURN!


AND WITH MI-RU SICK, I WANT A DOCTOR TO LOOK AT HER.
I'D PUSH FOR HOT BATHWATER, TOO, BUT SINCE WE'RE FIGHTING OVER WATER AS IT IS, I THINK I'LL LEAVE THAT OUT

HEY, KU-YA, GIVE THE KID A BREAK, WILL YA?
GIVE A WATER THIEF A BREAK? THAT AIN'T HOW I WORK

HMPH IT'S NOT EVEN THE WATER YOU'RE UPSET OVER YOU'RE JUST HARD UP FOR SOME ACTION
Wah ha ha!
Jeez, this thing weighs a ton!
COME ON THE KID'S GOT NO CHANCE AGAINST YOU SEE? CAN BARELY LIFT THE DANG SWORD
LUCCA, YOU ARE FAR TOO KIND FOR YOUR OWN GOOD

ALL RIGHT! FINE!
I'LL CHANGE THE TERMS OF THE DUEL IF YOU CAN BLOCK MY ATTACK THREE TIMES, I'LL OVERLOOK THE WATER YOU JUST STOLE
REALLY?
BETTER ACCEPT BEFORE I CHANGE MY MIND BLOCK ME THREE TIMES AND I'LL LET YOU AND THE GIRL GO

WHAT?! THE NERVE!
OH, AND A CLEAN SOFT BED TO SLEEP IN. LUMPY BEDS TEND TO GIVE ME NIGHTMARES.
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND? NIGHTMARES?! I'LL GIVE YOU NIGHTMARES, YOU LITTLE--!
WE'RE CHANGING THE TERMS, AREN'T WE? DON'T BE SO PETTY
PETTY?! YOU'RE THE ONE THAT STOLE FROM ME!
FINE. IF THAT'S TOO MUCH FOR YOU, HOW ABOUT THIS?
IF I BLOCK YOU THREE TIMES, YOU WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THAT I HAVE BEATEN YOU

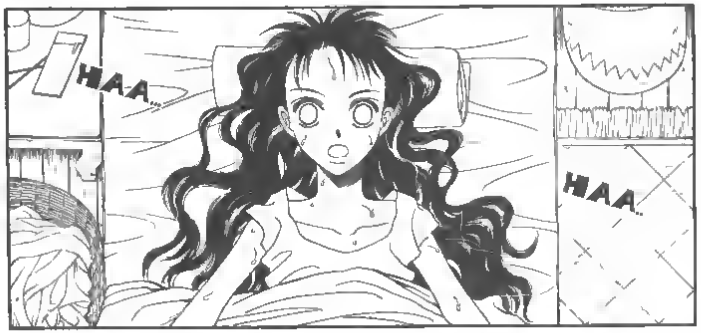
IS EVERY OUTLANDER AS MAD AS YOU ARE?
WHAT, ARE YOU AFRAID I'M GONNA WIN? WHY NOT CHANGE THE GROUND RULES AND HAVE YOU BLOCK ME THREE TIMES?
AND WHAT'S MY REWARD IF I WIN?
I'LL BE YOUR SLAVE. YOU CAN DO WITH ME AS YOU PLEASE!

HEH
YOU GOT IT! IF YOU WIN, I SWEAR TO TREAT YOU AND THAT GIRL LIKE ROYALTY!
BUT...
OFF

BUT IF I WIN, YOU AND THAT GIRL...
...WILL BE SOLD AS SLAVES.

...FINE. LET'S SEE HOW YOU FAIR
WHAT THE...?
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT
IF THAT SPEAR HITS ME, I'M DEAD MEAT
BUT...
...THIS IS ONE BATTLE...
...I CANNOT LOSE!

ABSOLUTELY NOT!!


HAA...
HAA..

WHAT A STRANGE...
...CEILING.
JUST WHERE IN THE WORLD...
...AM I?

ALL I CAN REMEMBER IS LEAPING INTO THE OCEAN
AND THEN HA-RU..
WHERE COULD I BE? I'M NOT ON THE LAST ISLAND, THAT'S FOR SURE. THIS PLACE ISN'T LIKE ANY PLACE I'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE.

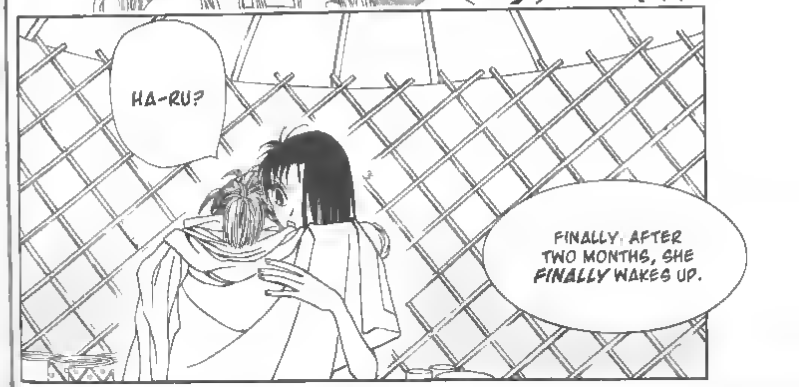
Pao: Mongol nomad's tent-like dwelling, easy to take apart and move. Also called a "ger."

MI-RU!
MI-RU IS AWAKE?!
WHAT? REALLY?
OKAY...
NOW I'M STARTING TO WORRY. WHERE COULD I POSSIBLY BE?
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD THIS KID'S SAYING
UH GAY WHAT?

...HA...RU?

YOUR, HEAD... HOW DOES IT FEEL?

IT'S BEEN SO LONG, I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER WAKE UP!
IT'S SUCH A RELIEF.


HA-RU?
FINALLY. AFTER TWO MONTHS, SHE FINALLY WAKES UP.

HEY. THE NAME'S KU-YA.
HOPEFULLY, YOU'RE NOT AS CRAZY AS THIS ONE. THE CRAZY ONES MAKE THE WORST SLAVES!

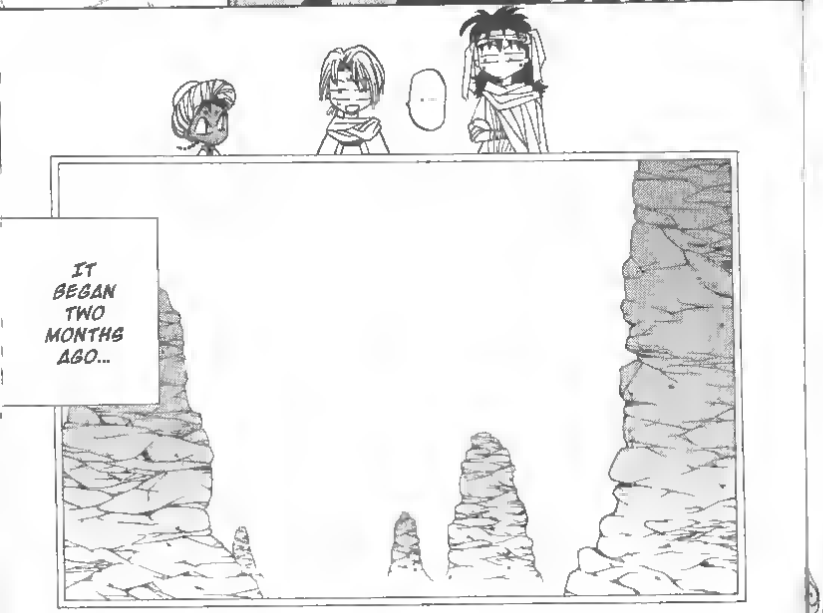
BUT...
...THAT FACE... THAT FIGURE...
HMM...

HEE HEE HEE...

CRAZY OR NO CRAZY, WITH A FACE AND BODY LIKE THAT, I COULD SELL YOU FOR A SIZABLE PROFIT.
PERHAPS THIS WASN'T A TOTAL LOSS, AFTER ALL.

BBF
MASTER, STOP LOOKING AT MI-RU LIKE THAT YOU'RE SCARING HER
WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS HITTING ME?! REMEMBER WHO'S THE MASTER AND WHO'S THE SLAVE HERE!
YOU'RE BEHAVING LIKE A THUG! YOU COULD AT LEAST TRY TO BE POLITE AND QUIT DROOLING!
YOU TELL 'IM, HA-RU' ♡
DO I HAVE TO REMIND YOU YET AGAIN THAT I WON OUR SECOND WAGER?

HEY, DON'T TAKE IT OUT ON ME!
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU'RE HERE FOR?
COME ON, MASTER LEAVE HIM BE
UM, HELLO? WOULD SOMEONE MIND FILLING ME IN?
SLAVE? MASTER? SINCE WHEN IS HA-RU A SLAVE? AND WHERE EXACTLY ARE WE?
AND WHAT LANGUAGE IS THAT KID SPEAKING? I CAN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD! WHAT IS GOING ON?!

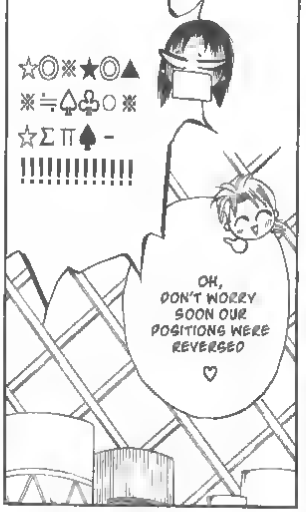

IT BEGAN TWO MONTHS AGO...

PREPARE YOURSELF!
COME AND GET ME!

BOW
I SURRENDER.
I am at your mercy

I WILL GLADLY BOW BEFORE SUCH A MERCIFUL AND BENEVOLENT MASTER ♡

WHO IN HIS GREAT KINDNESS WILL PROVIDE FOOD AND WATER, ♡ EVEN MEDICINE, ♡ TO ME, THE LOWLIEST OF HIS SUBJECTS ♡
MY HEART SWELLS WITH AFFECTION AND LOYALTY FOR SUCH A COMPASSIONATE MASTER


☆○※★○▲
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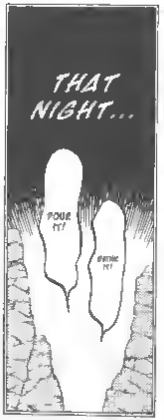
☆Σπ♠-
!!!!!!!!!!!!
OH, DON'T WORRY SOON OUR POSITIONS WERE REVERSED ♡


THAT NIGHT...
POUR IT!
DRINK IT!

TONIGHT WE CELEBRATE THE ACQUISITION OF A NEW SLAVE!

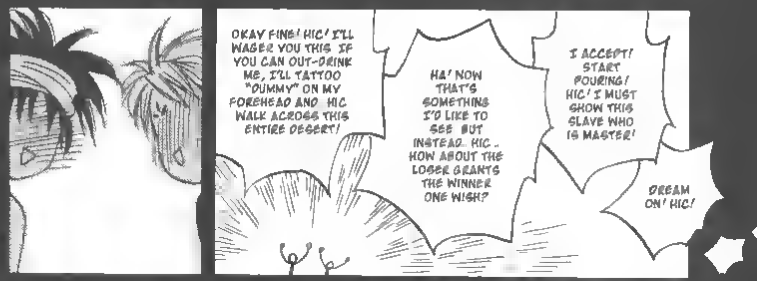
LET US DRINK TO THIS PROFITABLE DAY!
OH
OF
OF

HAH!
GULP GULP

DROOL
DROOL
WHAT, YOU WANT SOME OF MY WINE?
NOD
NOD
I DON'T THINK SO. IT'S QUITE STRONG. SOMEONE AS YOUNG AS YOU WILL PASS OUT AFTER JUST A FEW SIPS
SHAKE
SHAKE
ALL RIGHT, HAVE A GLASS. BUT DON'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YOU
WELL YOU REALLY TOSSED THAT BACK, DIDN'T YOU
OKAY, ONE MORE GLASS
STILL WANTING MORE? FINE, ONE MORE GLASS, BUT THAT'S IT!

SHORTLY AFTER...

HIC.. MAYBE I WAS WRONG TO THINK YOU WEAK AND COWARDLY HIC! YOU CAN REALLY HOLD YOUR LIQUOR. HIC! YOU'RE A LOT STRONGER THAN YOU LOOK. I THINK YOU'RE THE FIRST ONE TO KEEP UP WITH ME! HIC!
HIC! MASTER, YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHERE I COME FROM, I AM THE DRINKING CHAMPION, BESTING EVEN THE OBESE LUSH GUN-WON. HE. HIC! PASSED OUT AT MY FEET. I'M IMPRESSED THAT YOU HAVE KEPT UP WITH ME. HIC!
I'LL DRINK TO THAT! HIC! BUT I DON'T THINK THERE'S ANYONE WHO CAN HOLD HIS LIQUOR BETTER THAN ME. AND IF THERE IS, COME OUT AND FACE ME NOW! HIC!
HIC! WHY DID YOU HAVE TO GO AND SAY THAT? NOW I HAVE TO FACE YOU. HIC.. TO PRESERVE MY HONOR
HIC. SLAVE, DON'T GET TOO AHEAD OF YOURSELF. YOU CAN HOLD YOUR BOOZE, BUT HIC. YOU'RE JUST GOING TO EMBARRASS YOURSELF AGAIN BY CHALLENGING YOUR BETTER
HIC...HARDLY. I'M THE BOTTOMLESS PIT OF THE LAST ISLAND. I AM YOUR BETTER WHEN IT COMES TO DRINKING! BELCH!


OKAY FINE! HIC! I'LL WAGER YOU THIS. IF YOU CAN OUT-DRINK ME, I'LL TATTOO "DUMMY" ON MY FOREHEAD AND. HIC. WALK ACROSS THIS ENTIRE DESERT!
HA! NOW THAT'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO SEE. BUT INSTEAD. HIC.. HOW ABOUT THE LOSER GRANTS THE WINNER ONE WISH?
I ACCEPT! START POURING! HIC! I MUST SHOW THIS SLAVE WHO IS MASTER!
DREAM ON! HIC!

KYA HAA HAA HAA!
WHAT A PERFECT PAIR OF DRUNKEN SLOBS I SAY WE LEAVE THEM BEHIND
A TEMPTING IDEA...
They drank all of it!
KU-YA DRUNK AS A SKUNK
HA-RU. STILL FRESH ♡
WITH MY VICTORY, I DECLARED MYSELF MASTER OF MY MASTER I AM SLAVE TO MASTER, BUT MASTER IS MY SLAVE, AS WELL! ♡
THE "BOTTOMLESS PIT OF THE LAST ISLAND" REMAINS UNDEFEATED!
FINE, GO AHEAD AND GLOAT.

DON'T GET CRANKY, MASTER, JUST ACCEPT YOUR DEFEAT AND MOVE ON
WE SHOULD HAVE A REMATCH! I WAS TIRED THAT DAY A-AND SICK, TOO!
WAIT... ARE YOU TWO SERIOUS?
MI-RU?
THE LAST THING I REMEMBER IS FALLING INTO THE OCEAN. AND NOW YOU'RE TELLING ME WE'RE IN A DESERT FILLED WITH MONSTERS AND MERCENARIES AND THAT WE'VE BEEN GAMBLED INTO SLAVERY?!
WHAT KIND OF SICK GAME ARE YOU PLAYING, HA-RU?
IF YOU'RE MAKING FUN OF ME, YOU'RE DOING A DAMN GOOD JOB OF IT!
BUT DON'T DRAG OTHERS INTO YOUR LITTLE GAMES I ASSURE YOU, BREATHING THE SAME AIR AS YOU IS TORTURE ENOUGH YOU NEEDN'T EXECUTE AN ELABORATE HOAX JUST TO MAKE MY LIFE A LIVING HELL!

THREE...MOONS?
I WOULDN'T DO THAT TO YOU, MI-RU. I'M NOT MAKING ANYTHING UP.

WE'VE REALLY FALLEN INTO ANOTHER WORLD.

I WANT TO...
...GO BACK.
WHILE MY BODY AND LEGS STILL HAVE THE STRENGTH.

WHO IS THAT?
WHY DOES THAT VOICE SOUND SO SAD...?
WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU SO SAD? WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO?
I WANT TO GO BACK!!

I CAN ALMOST SEE YOU...
WHO ARE YOU?

WHO DO YOU THINK? IT'S YOUR MASTER!

TIME TO GET UP, LAZY BONES. NO TIME FOR SLEEPING IN.

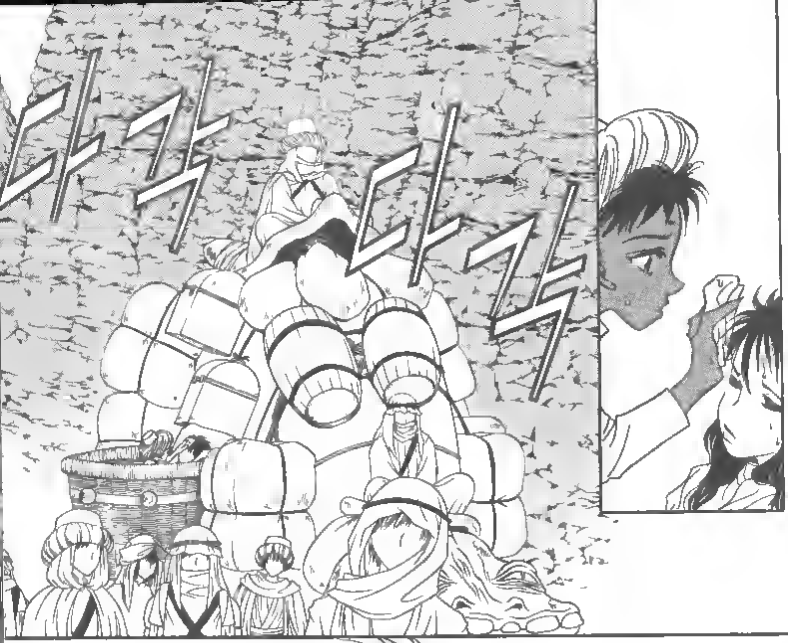
KYAAAAA!
SMACK
I'M SORRY, MASTER.
I'M REALLY SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT YOU!
I WAS HAVING A BAD DREAM, AND WHEN I WOKE UP, YOU WERE RIGHT THERE, SO--
WHAT THE HELL?!

I'M REALLY SORRY, MASTER.
I'M THE MASTER HERE! I SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WAKE YOU UP TO BEGIN WITH SAND DUST IS MORE USEFUL THAN YOU!
I AM A GIRL
WHY SO TOUCHY? YOU HIT YOUR MASTER JUST FOR COMING CLOSE WHILE YOU SLEEP?! WHAT, ARE YOU, A GIRL OR SOMETHING?

IT'S BEEN THREE MONTHS SINCE I CAME HERE, AND I'M STILL LIVING AS A BOY.

Yes Yes I was wrong to hit you

I CAN'T TELL HIM AFTER ALL THIS TIME THAT I'M A GIRL I FEEL SAFER AS A BOY, ANYWAY
BUT THE FACT THAT HE DOESN'T SUSPECT A THING... IS A LITTLE INSULTING
AND TO MAKE THINGS WORSE .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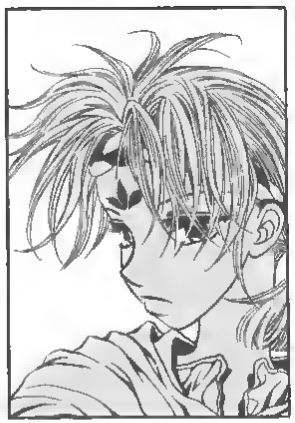
...MI-REU IS UNCONSCIOUS AGAIN AND SHOWS NO SIGNS OF WAKING

I JUST DON'T THINK SHE CAN HANDLE WHAT'S HAPPENED TO US
AND THE DESERT HEAT PROBABLY ISN'T DOING MUCH TO HELP
SHE STILL HATES ME, AND RIGHT NOW, THAT'S WORSE THAN BEING FAR FROM NOME OR BECOMING A SLAVE
EVEN NOW, WHEN I'VE DONE ALL I CAN TO PROTECT HER, SHE STILL DOESN'T CALL OUT MY NAME



SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HEY! ARE YOU PAYING ATTENTION?

EEk!

YOU WEREN'T EVEN LISTENING TO ME!

WHATEVER I'M TIRED OF NAGGING YOU. GO BACK TO LA-LA LAND AND I'LL JUST TALK TO MYSELF.

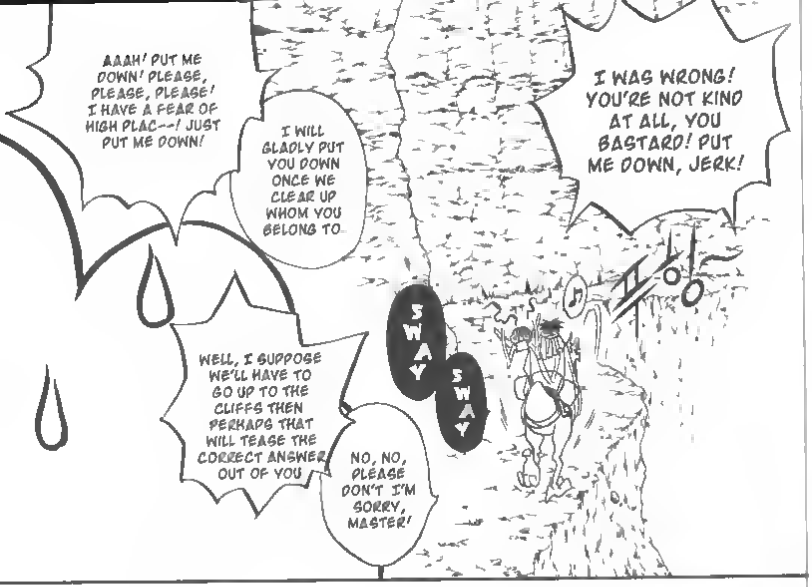
I'M SORRY... WHERE ARE WE HEADED?
WE'RE GOING TO THE RING CLAN'S VILLAGE FOR THE SUMMER.
FOR THE SUMMER?
I GUESS I SHOULDN'T EXPECT AN OUTLANDER TO KNOW, BUT SUMMER HERE IS LIKE FIERY HELL ITSELF. YOU COULD FRY AN EGG ON THE SAND AND THAT'S NO EXAGGERATION
DURING THE HEAT OF THE SUMMER, MERCENARY WORK IS HARD TO COME BY.
IN THE SPRING, WE PROVIDE DEFENSE FOR NOMADIC VILLAGES. SO WHEN SUMMER COMES AND THE NOMADS SETTLE FOR THE SEASON, WE STAY WITH THEM AND PROVIDE DEFENSE THIS YEAR, WE'RE WITH THE RING CLAN
AND THE RING CLAN IS ?
YOU'RE KIDDING! YOU'RE PRETTY IGNORANT, EVEN FOR AN OUTLANDER. CHA KI, THE ONE CARING FOR YOUR SISTER, IS PART OF THE RING CLAN. THE RINGS ARE NOT QUITE LIKE US--THEY'RE ANOTHER SPECIES. THEY ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR ABILITY TO BIND ANIMALS TO THEMSELVES.
A STRONG ADULT FROM THE RING CLAN IS EVEN ABLE TO BIND EVIL SPIRITS. SPIRITS CAN BE USEFUL IN WAYS THAT ANIMALS ARE NOT. BUT THE RING'S ARE A PRIVATE RACE--IF THEY DON'T KNOW YOU OR TRUST YOU, THEY WON'T EVEN SPEAK WITH YOU. MOST PEOPLE KNOW THAT SUCCESS IN THE DESERT DEPENDS ON BEFRIENDING THE RING CLAN.

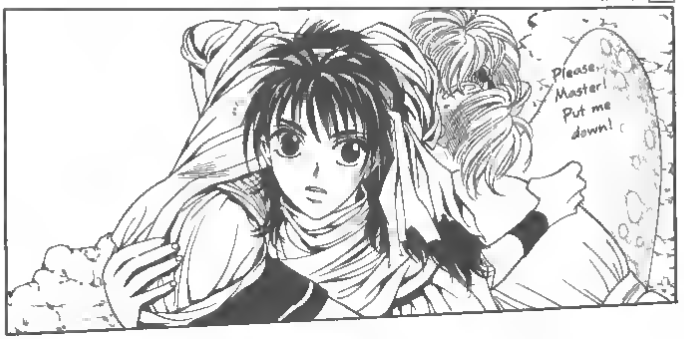
IT'S IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO KNOW ALL OF THIS BECAUSE THE CLAN IS STILL WARY OF YOU AND YOUR SISTER. CHA KI IS FRIENDLY ENOUGH WITH YOU, BUT HE'S JUST A CHILD
AVOID SHOWING THEM YOUR FLAWS, AND YOU'LL HAVE A CHANCE OF GAINING THEIR TRUST
THANK YOU FOR THE ADVICE, MASTER. YOU'RE KINDER THAN I THOUGHT
WHY WOULDN'T I LOOK OUT FOR YOU?
YOU BELONG TO ME, AFTER ALL.

MY SLAVE.
MY SERVANT.
MINE ALONE.

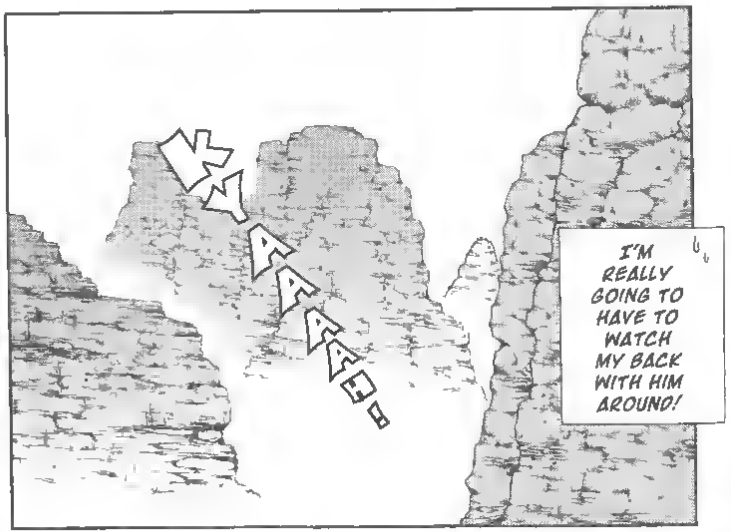
HE'S DANGEROUS-- STRONG AND SELF-RIGHTEOUS AS A BURNING FLAME.
EVEN SO, DESPITE MYSELF, I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL ATTRACTED TO HIM.
W-WELL, MAYBE SO, BUT--
BUT I ALSO BELONG TO MYSELF, SO EVEN IF YOU'RE MY MASTER, YOU CAN'T DO WHATEVER YOU LIKE WITH ME!
SO GET YOUR HANDS OFF ME!
I NEED TO PROTECT MY SECRET...

I CAN'T LET HIM GET TOO NEAR.
OH, REALLY?
KYAAAAA!
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU DOING?!
PUT ME DOWN!
SO, LET'S SEE. YOU BELONG TO WHOM NOW? YOU OR ME? WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER NOW? ♪

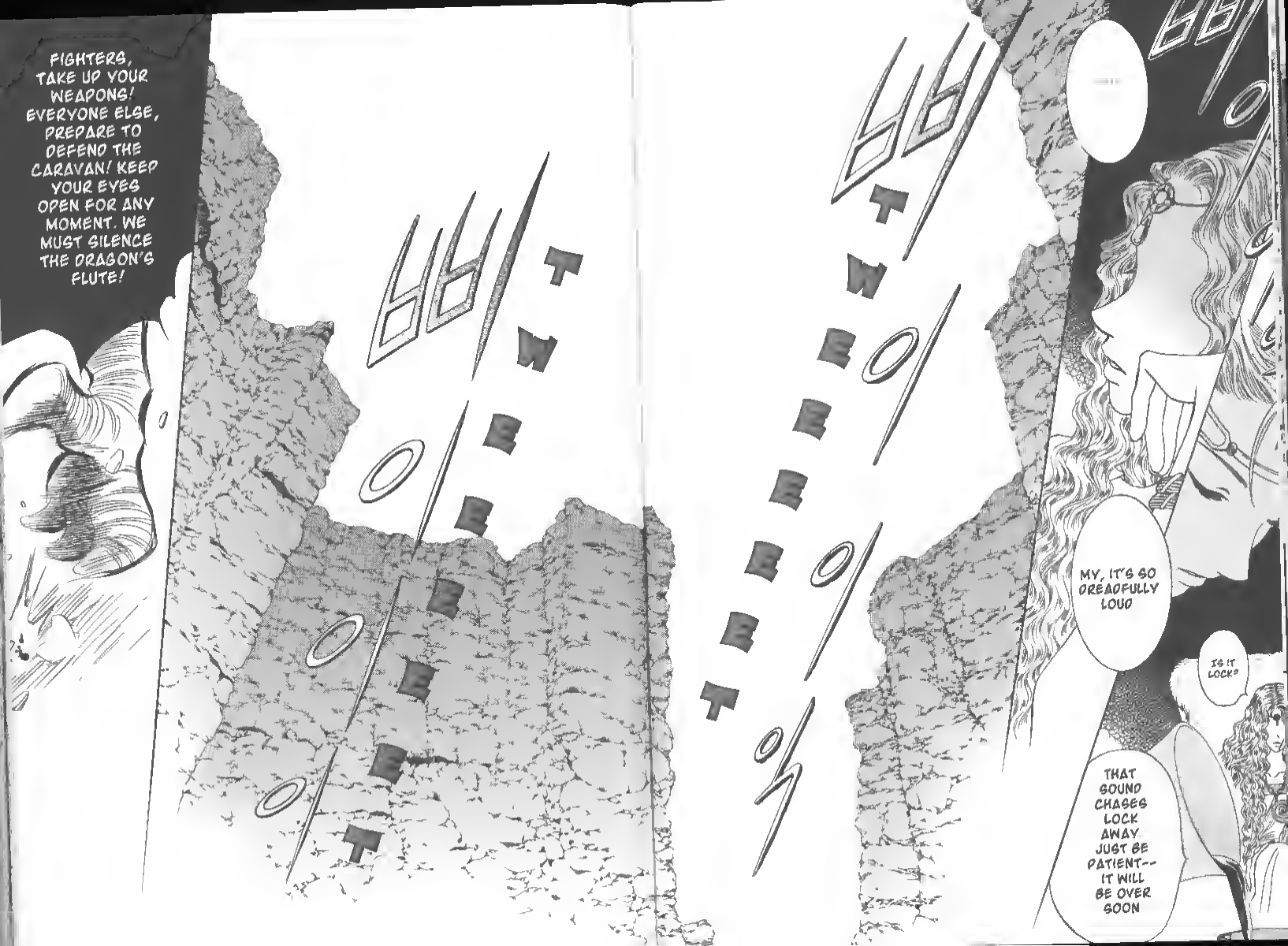

AAAH! PUT ME DOWN! PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE! I HAVE A FEAR OF HIGH PLAC--! JUST PUT ME DOWN!
I WILL GLADLY PUT YOU DOWN ONCE WE CLEAR UP WHOM YOU BELONG TO.
I WAS WRONG! YOU'RE NOT KIND AT ALL, YOU BASTARD! PUT ME DOWN, JERK!
SWAY
SWAY
WELL, I SUPPOSE WE'LL HAVE TO GO UP TO THE CLIFFS THEN PERHAPS THAT WILL TEASE THE CORRECT ANSWER OUT OF YOU.
NO, NO, PLEASE DON'T I'M SORRY, MASTER!


Please, Master! Put me down!

WHAT? THIS COULDN'T BE...
EH?


KYAAAAAA-
I'M REALLY GOING TO HAVE TO WATCH MY BACK WITH HIM AROUND!

KUIYA!
THE DRAGON'S FLUTE!
I HEAR IT!
DRAGON'S... FLUTE?
DAMN IT! WHO IS FOOLISH ENOUGH TO SOUND THE DRAGON'S FLUTE?


FIGHTERS, TAKE UP YOUR WEAPONS! EVERYONE ELSE, PREPARE TO DEFEND THE CARAVAN! KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN FOR ANY MOMENT. WE MUST SILENCE THE DRAGON'S FLUTE!
BU
TWEEEEEEEEEET
BU
TWEEEEEEEEEET
MY, IT'S SO DREADFULLY LOUD
IS IT LOCK?
THAT SOUND CHASES LOCK AWAY JUST BE PATIENT-- IT WILL BE OVER SOON

IT IS SAID LOCK IS THE MOST POWERFUL SPIRIT IN THE RED DESERT.
HE TERRORIZES THE LANDS, SWOOPING DOWN FROM THE SKY TO DEVOUR HORSES, AND EVEN HUMANS.
THEY CHASE HIM AWAY WITH THE DRAGON'S FLUTE HE CAN'T STAND THE SOUND OF IT.
I KNOW THE NOISE IS BOTHERSOME, BUT IT'S NECESSARY TO PROTECT US FROM LOCK'S FURY WE'RE CLOSE TO THE RING CLAN'S VILLAGE IT SHOULD BE OVER SOON
덜커
덜커
.. RING CLAN? ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT THE RING FAMILY THAT TAMES EVIL SPIRITS AND ARE KNOWN AS SU-IN-JOK?

Su in Jok: Minority race of desert people whose form resembles a cross between human and animal. Their will to live is stronger than humans...though they have a short lifespan

MUST WE REALLY VISIT THE SU-IN-JOK'S VILLAGE? THAT PLACE IS SO... INTOLERABLE
PLEASE BEAR WITH US PRINCESS IF WE ARE TO CROSS THE DESERT SAFELY WE MUST HAVE THE PROTECTION OF THE RING'S TAMED DEVIL SPIRIT
THIS WHOLE EXPEDITION IS RIDICULOUS WHY MUST I, PRINCESS OF WILAI, DEIGN TO VISIT THE KING OF A REMOTE DESERT NATION LIKE PA-LEE-LU TO WISH HIM A HAPPY BIRTHDAY?
PRINCESS, PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT SINCE PA-LEE-LU GAINED CONTROL OVER THE DEVIL SPIRIT, THE NATION HAS BECOME SOMEWHAT OF A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH
TWEET
THE KING HAS ENTRUSTED YOU AS HIS DELEGATE BECAUSE HE HAS FAITH IN YOUR SKILLS AS A DIPLOMAT

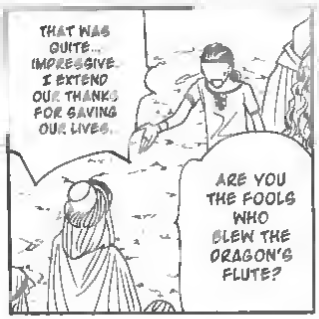
YES, I'M AWARE OF THAT FACT. BUT I'M STILL ANGERED BY THE WHOLE SITUATION. PA-LEE-LU HAS PLACED TOO MUCH IMPORTANCE ON THIS DEVIL SPIRIT. SORCERERS HAVE LOST THEIR DOMINION OVER MAGIC. THEY MIGHT AS WELL BE BEGGARS ON THE STREET.
THIS LITTLE DIPLOMATIC MISSION ONLY SERVES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT PA-LEE-LU IS GAINING POWER. AT THIS RATE, WILAI MIGHT AS WELL TURN CONTROL OF THE CONTINENT OVER TO THEM.
PRINCESS, PLEASE STOP THE CARRIAGE.
A POWERFUL SPIRIT IS CHARGING TOWARD US AND MEANS TO ATTACK.
WHAT?!
ARRRHG!
EEEEk!
PRINCESS!
DARKNESS FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE ABYSS!
BEND TO THE WILL OF YOUR MASTER. RISE! RISE FROM THE DEPTHS AND PROTECT SHE WHO COMMANDS YOU!

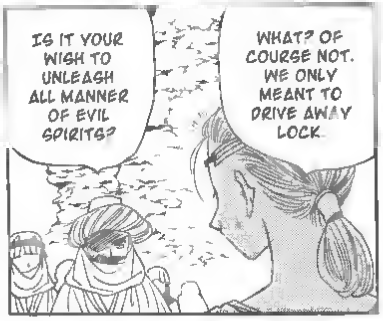
I REPEL YOU, FOUL DEMON!
WHAT'S HAPPENING...?
CLUNK
WE BLEW THE DRAGON'S FLUTE!

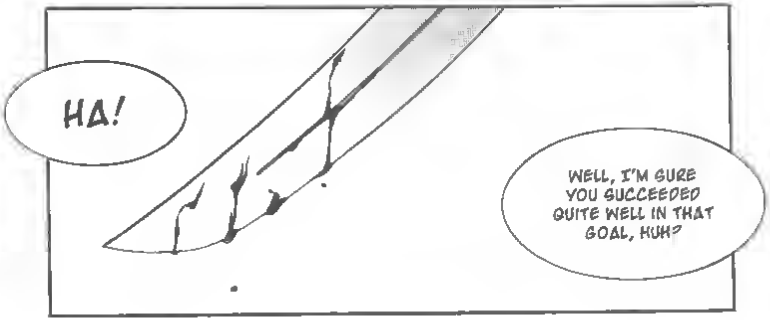
SO, WHY ARE WE UNDER ATTACK?!
LOOK OUT! IT'S A DEMON!
RUN! RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!
COWARDS! ALL DESERTERS WILL BE EXECUTED! DO YOUR DUTY AND PROTECT THE PRINCESS!

GET BACK HERE!
AAARRGH!!
THIS IS IT! DEFEND THE PRINCESS TO THE DEATH!

AIM FOR THE HEART!
YOU THERE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! THAT DEMON WILL TEAR YOU APART!
FIRE!


THAT WAS QUITE... IMPRESSIVE. I EXTEND OUR THANKS FOR SAVING OUR LIVES.
ARE YOU THE FOOLS WHO BLEW THE DRAGON'S FLUTE?


IS IT YOUR WISH TO UNLEASH ALL MANNER OF EVIL SPIRITS?
WHAT? OF COURSE NOT. WE ONLY MEANT TO DRIVE AWAY LOCK.


HA!
WELL, I'M SURE YOU SUCCEEDED QUITE WELL IN THAT GOAL, HUH?

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF SOMETHING AS BACKWARDS AS WHAT YOU JUST SAID

I CAN SEE THAT YOU ARE A NEWCOMER TO THESE PARTS, SO I'LL EXCUSE YOUR STUPIDITY THIS ONCE. THE DRAGON'S FLUTE DOES CHASE LOCK AWAY BUT IT SUMMONS A LEGION OF OTHER EVIL SPIRITS

YOU MEAN THESE CREATURES ARE ATTACKING BECAUSE WE USED THE DRAGON'S FLUTE?
YES. YOU HAVE BROUGHT THEIR MALICE DOWN UPON ALL OF OUR HEADS
BECAUSE OF YOUR RASH ACTIONS, WE ARE ALL IN MORTAL DANGER.

AND IF THAT WEREN'T BAD ENOUGH, THE BLOOD FROM THIS BATTLE WILL ATTRACT EVEN DEADLIER CREATURES.
MAKE PEACE WITH YOURSELVES NOW. WE ARE ALL AS GOOD AS DEAD.

Continued in Rure Volume 2.

IN THE NEXT VOLUME OF...

RURE

Mi-ru,

I know you must still be frightened, but we're not alone in this strange world! Princess Wan of Wilai Azus might be a little rash in her decisions, but it looks like she's willing to help Ku-ya and the rest of us out! I'm just worried about the distant city of Waka I've been hearing about. Seems it's famous for its slave markets and--gulp!--gladiator tournaments! Let's just hope we don't find ourselves there...